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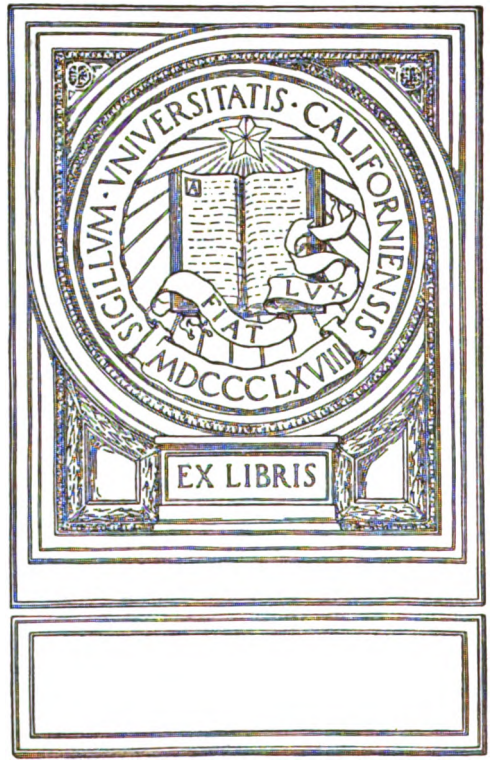

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THE MERCHANT VENTURERS OF LONDON

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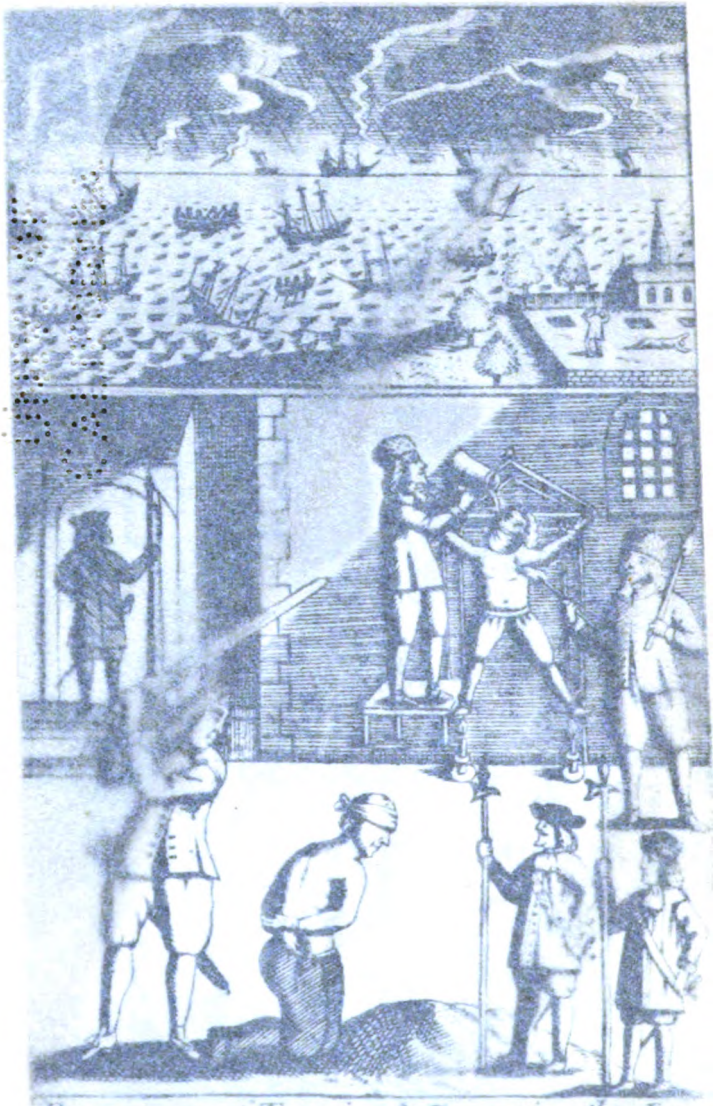

The manner of Torturing & Executing the E

THE MERCHANT VENTURERS OF LONDON. *A Record of Far Eastern Trade & Piracy during the Seventeenth Century.* *By* CHARLES GREY; *Edited and with a Preface by Lieut.-Gen.* SIR GEORGE MACMUNN. *With Reproductions from Old Prints*

Univ. of California

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PREFACE

THIS account of the early merchant adventurers, whose daring and endurance finally brought about the great British-Indian Empire, has been compiled from obscure and often inaccessible sources, or rescued from old records by Mr. Charles Grey of Lahore.

Mr. Grey has spent most of his years in the East, and the story of the early adventurers, merchants, pirates, and soldiers of fortune he has made peculiarly his own, and has indeed some of their blood in his veins, and their example in his own life.

My share in this volume has but been in arranging his material in convenient form for the press.

GEORGE MACMUNN
(*Lieut.-General*)

SACKVILLE COLLEGE,
February 1932.

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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

To those of an age in which so little has been left to discover or explore, the personalities of those long-forgotten forefathers who first trod the hitherto unexplored interiors of the Far East, and Farther East, in the interests of trade and commerce may be interesting. Especially so should be the personalities and adventures of those merchants and mariners who, in the seventeenth century, laid the foundations of the edifice of Empire, of which they of the eighteenth built the superstructure, and the men of the nineteenth coped and capped.

It is not proposed to write of the more prominent, for their deeds have been so often iterated and reiterated that the world may well grow weary of men who so eternally monopolise the front of the stage, obscuring the lesser but indispensable crowd of minor actors who lurk, nameless, in the gloom of oblivion.

Yet in their day such men played a worthy, interesting, or amusing part; worthy indeed of rescue from the seldom-read pages of the ancient and ponderous volumes which usually lie undisturbed on the remoter shelves of ancient libraries, their brittle and yellow pages slowly falling to decay.

It is now proposed to rescue from these forgotten archives such of these lesser-known merchants and mariners of "The Company of Merchant Adventurers of London Trading into the East Indies" as may be fitting, and, where possible, to clothe the dry bones of history with the living substance of the men's own

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words. These men will show how they sailed over uncharted seas, traded, fought, and, too often, left their bones in the recesses of Davy's Locker or to leaven the burning soil of a far-off land.

C. G.

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CHAPTER I

THE MERCHANTS

MARINERS AND MERCHANTS—THE SCOTTISH VENTURERS—CHARLES II AND THE COMPANY—THE DELINQUENCIES OF THE MERCHANTS—THE MISERABLE REMUNERATION OF EMPLOYEES—THE POMP AND STATE OF THE GOVERNORS

MARINERS AND MERCHANTS

THERE seems to have been some kind of tacit arrangement by which the western oceans were left to the south-western and western counties of England, whilst the eastern seas became the perquisite of the eastern and south-eastern; for, with the exception of William Hawkins, of the famous Devon family, and a few Welshmen, the mariners of the merchant venturers seem to have hailed from Chatham, Deptford, Limehouse, Rotherhithe, Rochester, Wapping and other Thames-side places, just as famous nurseries of English seamen as ever were Devon or Plymouth.

As with the mariners so with the merchants. None of these came from the north or west; the Midlands, the Home counties, the eastern and south-eastern counties, and, most important of all, London itself, all contributed their quota to the trading stations of India and the Farther East. Though mostly of reputable families, few were Puritans, except perchance in speech or profession, for the life they led soon coarsened their fibre and blunted their sense of morality, and, too often, their common honesty towards their employers in the matter of private trade and other operations.

Few, indeed, made fortunes. In fact, the wages paid

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them were not enough for even a bare existence, with the natural result that those who became wealthy were the most able and least scrupulous, a combination very often met with, especially in traders in out-of-the-way places. But who may blame them, considering the risks they took, the conditions under which they were compelled to live, and the fact that so many fell by the way? As ever, it was the smug stay-at-home citizen who reaped the crop his more adventurous brother had sown and brought to fruition. One may muzzle the ox that "treadeth out the corn," but at times the muzzle may come loose and the grudged animal repay himself in full. Queer morality, one may say, but a very human phase of it.

Lest it be objected that overmuch use of the word English is made, to the exclusion of British, be it said at once that no excuse is necessary, for the merchant venturers of the present theme were exclusively English, and citizens of London either by birth or domicile. Even though the same king ruled both nations, and endeavoured to deprive them of their nationality by naming them North and South Britain, the Scots never accepted the partnership as a real one, and remained aloof from English trade until the failure of their trading or colonising enterprises showed them convincingly that the English were best at both, and co-partnership the most profitable to Scotland.

THE SCOTTISH VENTURERS

As early as 1619, and as soon as it was seen that the enterprise the English had initiated was a most profitable one, Sir James Cunningham applied for, and obtained, a charter for a separate Scotch Company, in spite of the fact that a monopoly had been given to the English Company in 1600 by Queen Elizabeth and confirmed by himself in 1609. The open disregard

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of their rights was greeted by the London Company with such a storm of protest that King James was obliged to cancel it, though only on condition that the London Company compensated their intended rivals for the loss of a share in the harvest the English Company had sown.

But this was not the first attempt of the Stuarts to override the monopoly granted to the East India Company of London, for, in 1604, James had given a separate charter to Sir Edward Michelborne, under which the knight had fitted out an expedition and sailed to the Farther East. The enterprise proving unfruitful in the matter of legitimate trade, Sir Edward compensated himself by frank piracy on country ships, compensation for which had to be paid by the Company.

The aloofness of the Scots, as a nation, and even as individuals, continued until after the end of the seventeenth century, and until the failure of certain enterprises had convinced the Scots that co-operation with the English was the more profitable. The Scots East India Company certainly endured until 1702, for in that year the *Speedy Return*, belonging to it, was taken by Bowen, the pirate, at St. Mary's, Madagascar, whilst its sister ship was cast away on the Sumatran coast. The fate of a third venture is thus described by Captain Alexander Hamilton, an independent trader of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in his *New History of the East Indies*:

"The English formerly drove a trade for slaves at St. Augustine's and other places in Madagascar. But now they are afraid of the Pirates though some venture their necks in trading with them. There have been several squadrons of British war vessels sent out to cruise on the pirates but with very ill success. But one Scots ship commanded by one Captain Millar did the Public more service in destroying pirates than all the chargeable squadrons that were sent in quest of them,

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for with a cargo of strong ale and brandy which he carried to sell to them in the year 1704 he killed above 500 of them though they took his ship as a present, and most of his men entered with the Pirates."

But the ill fate of this Scots skipper was more than balanced by that of another, James Macrae, who defended his ship, the *Cassandra*, so stoutly against England, the pirate, at Johanna, in 1720. Though he was unsuccessful the Company took him into their shore service, and eventually made him Governor of Madras, a post he held from 1725 to 1730, retiring with an enormous fortune.

The most formidable competitor of the London Company, and its bitterest enemy, was the Dutch Company, which had entered the field a few years earlier. The constitution of the two Companies was fundamentally different, for, whereas the Dutch was State aided, or, more correctly, a State institution, in which all the States General held shares, and behind which stood the resources of the nation, the English Company was purely a private concern, which, far from receiving any State aid, was compelled to pay heavily for even sufferance, and in enormous sums for charters and customs duty.

The Stuarts seem to have looked on the Company as a concern which owed them much in return for nothing and bled it at every possible opportunity. Another peculiarity was that each voyage was, at first, an entirely independent venture which found its own funds and shared out its profits at the end of the voyage; hence the shareholders might have separate interests in several voyages, for each of which there was a joint-stock account. Regarding themselves as purely a trading concern, the English Company never attempted armed conquest of Asiatic countries, to administer territory, or to build and garrison fortresses with European soldiers, and native levies. They contented themselves

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with hiring a piece of land on which they built a humble factory, or, as in the case of Surat, hired an old fort from the Mogul Emperor.

From the very commencement the Dutch Company, though their country owed its very existence to the English nation, which had saved them from the Spanish domination, did their utmost to ruin, or discredit, their English competitors; a course they were enabled to follow with impunity owing to the criminal complaisance of the Scottish King of England. They took their ships, confiscated them, imprisoned and murdered their seamen, who were paraded in chains through the native towns where both Companies had factories; sometimes with an hour-glass marched before them to show that their time was near at hand. As early as the year 1611 we find this complaint in a petition to the King, James I:

"Ye merchants of London, trading into the East Indies sheweth that your supplicants having long and patiently endured sundry notorious wrongs and injurious courses at the hands of the Hollanders in their trade to the East Indies are now enforced to at last break silence and complain their greifes." Then follows a long list of grievances, embracing the capture and sinking of English vessels, the murder of their crews, the plundering and burning of the merchants' factories, insulting the English flag and holding captive Englishmen up to native contumely.

But absolutely no action was taken, for King James, with the usual Stuart indifference to all but personal interests, could not realise that the matter was one of supreme national importance, but treated it merely as a private quarrel between two money-making corporations in which one was just as bad as the other. Indeed, James carried his complaisance to the Dutch so far as to decide all cases in their favour up to the year 1619; a policy which encouraged the Dutch to

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further outrages, and probably influenced the terrible tragedy of Amboyna.

CHARLES II AND THE COMPANY

Nor were his successors any better, except, possibly, Charles II, for none took any decisive measures to stay, avenge, or exact compensation for the outrages committed on the persons and property of his subjects by the Dutch Company. Charles I even extorted money, powder, and cannon whenever he required them, which, in the case of the first, was often. He gave charters to new enterprises regardless of the rights of the Company, issued letters of marque for piratical enterprises knowing full well that compensation would be exacted from the Company, and levied such heavy customs that, in 1641, the Company seriously considered proposals for winding up its affairs.

Charles II did, indeed, go to war with the Dutch in 1662, but only in consideration of a large sum of money. How much he actually got at this time is not exactly stated, but it is on record that he extracted £325,000 from the Company during his reign, which in those days was a vast sum. As for James II, Captain Hamilton, his own countryman, on the subject, may well be quoted:

"In the year 1683 the Dutch Company dispossessed the English from their Factory at Bantam on the West End of Java, and the English having a mind to regain it by force of arms built several large ships of between sixty and seventy guns; so that in the year 1685 they had a fleet ready victualled and manned with seven or eight thousand men, to the Number of Twenty Three Sail of Line of battle Ships. This expense and the continual craving of the Court, brought their stock very low. Yet since the Maw of the Court was not enough crammed, the King laid Embargoes on the

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Fleet from Time to Time for nine months. Then the Dutch Ambassadors had Orders to present his Majesty with One Hundred Thousand Pounds if he would command the English Company not to use violence. He snapped at the bait and Defeated the Design to all Intents and Purposes."

Yet out of evil came good, for, deprived of their possessions in the Farther East, the English Company concentrated their efforts on India, from which they finally drove out the Dutch, whose last possession of Chinsurah passed to the English very early in the nineteenth century. The power of the Dutch had, however, been finally broken forty years previously, Chinsurah being the last of the very many forts and factories they had once possessed on the coasts of India and in Ceylon. The whole treatment of the East India Company by the Stuart Kings is one of the most discreditable of the many unsavoury episodes in the history of a discredited dynasty.

In studying the story of the Company, it is curious to note how often the positions of the merchants and the shipmasters were interchanged, and how efficiently each was capable of performing the duties of the other. Of such instance the names of Lancaster, Middleton Keeling, Clevenger, Weddell, Wilde, Cogan, Methwold and others, suggest themselves. Since, however, each ship carried a master's mate who was responsible for the navigation, it is probable that when merchants were in charge the chief mate handled the ship.

In education the merchants generally seem to have been well up to the standard of the time, and, to judge by the many classical allusions some were so fond of, even better than the majority of the leisured classes of the nobility and county gentry, or perhaps the ordinary business man of the present day. They were essentially business men of the middle class, such titled men as were to be found being either city knights, or noblemen

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brought in for the patronage their influence at Court would induce.

These early adventurers, indeed, seem to have heartily disliked the employment of "gentlemen," to judge by the following, which is the reply to the Lord Treasurer's recommendation of Sir Edward Michelborne to be "Generall" of the First Fleet voyage:

"Wee purpose nott to ymploy anie gent in anie playse of charge, or commaundement in the saide voyage, for besyde oure owne mislyke of suche, we knowe thatt the generalitie will nott endure of suche a notion, and yf. if they bee ernestlie be pressed thereto, will withdraw theire adventure."

Possibly they had in mind the experiences of Sir Francis Drake with "gentlemen mariners," whose contempt for the ordinary seaman, shirking of work, and claims to exemptions and peculiar privileges, so enraged him that he threatened to put ashore, or even execute, all "those who will nott hale and drawe with the mariners, and cease from demanding privilege." To judge by the following quotation from the *Further Correspondence of Samuel Pepys* the gentleman captain of seventy years later seems to have been much the same as the men the Company and Sir Francis Drake disliked so heartily. The letter is in reply to one from Sir John Holmes, recommending an exception for special promotion:

"Extremely glad am I of the good character you give me of Captain Terrill of the *Drake*. For I have, of late, since all mouths, as well as ears are open come to understand how such as Mr. Legge, Captain Russell, Captain Priestman, and others of their intimacy do take the liberty of censuring me, and also uttering no small menaces against me as an enemy to Gentlemen Captains, on account of my endeavours to restrain that neglect and contempt of the necessary discipline to the navy I find them so prone to, by absenting

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themselves without leave, or limitation from their charge, and otherwise, to the scandal and ruin of the King's Navy.

"Whilst at the same time, which seems not a little ridiculous, it was reckoned up in the House of Commons by my Friend, Colonel Birch, as one of the miscarriages of the present navy for which a particular account is expected of me next Thursday of the names and quality of every commander in the Fleet. It is said that employment is now wholly bestowed upon the gentlemen to the no small discouragement of the Tarpawlins of Wapping and Blackwall from whom the best commanders of old time used to come."

The truth seems to be that the conditions of the early trading days required a very different class of shipmaster to that necessary in the last century of existence of the Company. He of the early days was of the same class as the skipper of the tramp steamer of the present era, to whom cargo, its speedy shipping and unloading, and the safety of his ship are the only considerations. He must be a good navigator, and, above all, a hardy seaman who can, and must of necessity, put up with food, accommodation, and a continual grind of work and a different life to that lordly liner.

Until about 1760 such shipmasters were the rule, for the local army was very small, the Company's servants still less numerous, and both were compelled to put up with such accommodation as was available, it being all free. After this period the vessels coming out and going home from India and China began to carry more and more passengers of the official classes, who had to pay heavily for their fares in consequence of their enhanced salaries. Hence the rough tarpaulin of former days had to give way to the more polished passenger-ship captain, many of whom made more in a voyage than the tarpaulin had dreamt of for a lifetime.

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Which was the better seaman matters not. Other times, other manners.

THE DELINQUENCIES OF THE MERCHANTS

A good deal of capital has been made of the moral delinquencies of the merchants and mariners of the period, but, after all, they were not so terrible, and not a bit worse than one can find, even nowadays, in the remoter parts of the world where Englishmen are compelled to dwell. Circumstances alter cases, for the church-going clerk may become a very different person when exiled in a West African station, and the refined public school boy, under certain surroundings of solitude and exile, becomes occasionally an immoral drunkard. So, if the less, or supposedly less, cultivated product of other ages succumbed occasionally to the temptations of his environment, it is not for us, who are not so tempted, to stone him with the bricks of condemnation and contempt.

Unlike the Dutch, who permitted the wives of the merchants, and even of the soldiers, to accompany their men abroad, or sanctioned legal alliances with the women of the country, the English Company, except in a few and very exceptional cases, forbade European women in their factories, and, more than that, usually dismissed a servant who had legally married a native woman, though taking no notice of irregular connections. In fact, in the case of a certain John Leach, in 1626, it is on record that the President in Consultation decided that it was better to take no notice of his having a woman in keeping, lest, if they did, he might marry her, with the result that the Company would have to dismiss an old and tried servant!

If, then, the majority of the minor, and a fair number of the major, servants of the Company, in its early days, were free livers, there was ample excuse, considering

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the places they lived in, and the conditions under which their lives were passed. Those who have seen, or themselves experienced, such an existence, can find ample condonation even to-day for an occasional lapse. What then can be said about three hundred years ago, when men came abroad for a lifetime, most of which was to be spent in lonely stations, perhaps solitary, or, at best, with a few companions who soon became intolerable to each other. There is considerable human nature in the old story of the two men who were cast up on a desert island, and, after a few weeks, partitioned it off, each keeping to his own territory and never speaking to the other.

But, as usual, there were exceptions. All men did not succumb, though probably the exceptions were few. Of the exceptions the most extraordinary case is that quoted by Birdwood in the *First Letter Book*, concerning a young man whom he styles a "double martyr to love and conscience." His letters home were full of remorseful confessions of his inability to withstand the alluring beauty of the young Indian women, and his contrivances to enable him to resist it. At last, in utter despair at his own weakness, he put himself beyond temptation by the application of a dose of melted lead to the proper place.

Moral obliquity, unhappily, was not confined to the early servants of the Company, to judge by the following extracts from the *Calcutta Journal* of the year 1844. The first runs:

"Throughout a long series of years, the British in India, as moral beings, lagged far behind their brethren in Europe. Time was when they imported into their Eastern settlements all the vices and none of the virtues of Christians. The result was that Christianity was looked upon by the natives of Hindustan as just another name for irreligion and immorality, and to be a Christian was, in their estimation, to be lustful, rapacious, cruel,

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a loud and angry sot, a contemner of God, and a scourge to his fellows."

Such men were naturally taken by Orientals to be typical of the English nation, the result being that the latter, through the conduct of these few individuals, acquired a foul name it took years of good conduct and government to obliterate. This was severe enough, but, as the following show, not without a certain amount of truth.

In 1676 the Reverend Patrick Warner, Chaplain at Fort St. George, thus wrote to the Court of Directors:

"Your heads would be fountains of waters, and eyes rivers of tears did you really know, how much God is dishonoured, His name blasphemed, and religion reproached by the Gentiles, by reason of the vicious lives of many of your servants."

In 1683 William Hedges, Chief in Bengal, wrote:

"The best of the Company's servants (at least those so esteemed) your honours can never be well served until you take the Dutch course, and method of empowering your agent on the spot to turn out all that offend in any matter."

And a month later:

"Mr. Harvey, Chief at Malda regards nothing but to enjoy his little seraglio of strumpets and to live at ease with them at the expense of the Company."

In 1682 the Court of Directors despairingly wrote to Sir John Goldsborough:

"By long experience of about twenty years finding out our servants not only grossly fraudulent, but inclined to faction, insomuch as no sooner have we suppressed one faction than another springeth up amongst the newly preferred. By such factions the obedience due from our inferior servants to their superiors hath wholly ceased and instead thereof, idleness, vice, drunkenness, and profaneness hath ensued to the scandal of our nation."

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Indeed, the Company had many troubles to contend with, due largely to the distance of their business from their centre.

Almost without exception their servants and sea captains engaged largely in private trade. They were certainly allowed a small venture, but this was a mere drop in the ocean compared with what they habitually indulged in, much to the detriment of their employers' interests, for they used ships, stores and staff for their own benefit openly. To such an extent did this evil increase by the days of Clive and Hastings that the latter was compelled to abolish the privilege legally enjoyed and take very stern steps to suppress the evil entirely.

Up to the time of Lord Cornwallis, the illicit gains of their servants were a constant worry to the Company, and endless were the efforts made to suppress extreme liberty arrogated by the merchants in this matter, and keep it within the permitted bounds. During the first fifty years of their existence the "Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies" (which title endured until 1830) found this one of the few matters in which they and the Stuart kings were at one, because this merchandise loaded abroad was either unloaded in a foreign port, or smuggled ashore in England, in either case depriving the King of the import duty, which in those days was his personal concern.

In the same way the export duty was evaded, such private trade goods being taken aboard in the Channel or down river after the voyage had legally commenced. Struck in a vital part, Charles I issued the following Royal Proclamation, dated 15th July 1627:

"Manye abuses are laytely crept intoe the East India trayde by reason of the practice of officers and others ymployed by the sayde Companie and their confederates in gayning atte theyre own profitt by

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driving a secret and underhand trayde wherbye His Maiestie is defrauded of his Customs and Subsidies and the sayde Companie of its Freyte and Goodes. . . . His Maiestie nott intending to passe bye such abuses, beeinge of suche dangerous consequences; doth herebye streightlie charge and commande upon paine of incurring His Highness displeasure, and toe bee punyshed as Contemner of his Maiestie's Royal Proclamation, that noe particular man of the sayde Companie, nor anie of those officers, or servauntes, or anie other thatt may nowe, or herafter bee ymployed in anie of theyre shipps trading intoe anie of the sayde Easterlie parts, or anie other person thatt shall henceforth drive anie underhand trayde toe or from the Indies afiresayde but such as shall be licensed by the sayde Companie.

"This leicense toe trayde privately granted bye the sayde Companie to theyre servauntes was in addition toe the extraordinary greate wages they were accustomed to paye. They gave permission toe adventure and trayde for teyre proper and private accountes either toe or from the sayde East Indyes in suche wares and merchaundise, and in suche quantities, and proportions as may herinafter followe.

"Perpetuanoes, Draperies, Pewter, Safforn Woolen Stockings, Silke Stockinges, Silke Garters and Ribbans Roses (Rosettes) edged with Gold Layce, Beaver hattes with Gold and Silver bandes Felt Hattes, Aquavitae and all other kinds of stronge waters Knives of alle sortes, Spanish Leather Shoes Iron and Looking Glasses wares lysenced toe be exported toe the East Indyes.

"The Wares which are lysenced toe be brought from the East Indyes intoe England are Longe Pepper, White Pepper, White Powdered Suggar, Nutmegs, Preserved Ginger, Mirabillions, Bezoar Stones, Drugges of all Sortes, Aggats, Beades, Bloodstones, Muskes, Alloes, Socotrine, Ambergreace (?) Rich Carpets of

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Camaby and Persia Quiltes of Sateen and of Taffetye, Paynted Callicoes Quilts of Pittanoes embroydered with Silver, Dihanium, Damask, Sateens and Taffetyes of China, Quilts of China embroydered with Gould, Galls, Wormwood, Sugar Candy, China Dishes, Pussaines of alle sortes.

"The total quantity permitted toe be exported, or imported for the private account on anie servaunte is Suche Onelie as may be packed in a chest of Fower Foote long, one foote and hauf a foote broade, and one foote and one hauf deepe. Double this quantities beeing permitted to Commaunders, Factors, Pursers, Captains, and Master's Maytes."

This fulmination, having proved futile, was followed by another dated 9th February 1632:

"His Maistie findinge that his aforesayde Proclamation hath nott produced that goode effect which was intended thereby, neyther hath the favour and liberal allowance of the sayde Companie tayken suche effect but that officers and servauntes and factors ymployed in the same viages aforesayde for theyre onwe private gayne ande beneffit, though it hath been to the common danger of the sayd Companie aforesayde have adventurered in the outwards, and homwards viages, and alsoe in the Indies to carrye, buye, selle, and barter divers other goodes, wares, and merchandises to sayde Companie is content to give further allowances of free merchandise; namely toe Captains, Commaunders, Factors, fower suche chests apiece anded toe every one of the Pursers, Maytes, Gunners, Boatswaynes, Carpenters, and Stewards two suche chests.

"The Governor and Companie are required to depute under theyre Common Seale, sufficient and able persons to goe aboard suche vessels whether atte sea or in anie porte outside England and toe seize all illicit goodes, and arrest all those who shall be found contrarient, and hand them over to justice."

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But neither royal proclamations, heavy fines, dismissals and confiscations sufficed to stay, or even mitigate the evil, which so increased with the years that it had finally to be suppressed by drastic measures. Naturally, we hear little of those who made great fortunes, but none in high authority were exempt. It will suffice to quote the two cases of Elihu Yale, after whom the great American University is named, and James Macrae, who was specially taken into the Company's service on account of his bravery when his ship was taken by pirates.

Yale commenced on a salary of £5 per annum, and though he never reached more than £500 a year, and that for a few years only at the end of his career, retired with a known fortune of £175,000. Macrae, who only served the Company for seven years in all, and lost everything when his ship was taken, managed to accumulate over £100,000. What he might have made had he adopted piracy we may imagine.

THE MISERABLE REMUNERATION OF EMPLOYEES

But when we consider the ridiculously inadequate salaries that were paid to all employees, the fact that only one-third was payable in India, the remainder being retained until the end of the agreed period of service, the climatic and other conditions which rendered death an ever-present possibility, and the haunting horror of leaving family or dependants to poverty or destitution, we cannot be surprised that those who had opportunity made the best of it. In fact, there may have been times when, like Clive, the factors and others "wondered at their own moderation." Hear what John Weddell told the Court of Directors in the year 1630:

"You would do well to offer your old and tryed servauntes some inducements to staye in youre service here. Theyre remuneration is soe smalle that in thise

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partes it will nott finde them clothes, for these people are of a nacion with whom on necesity your factors must, in the matter of apparel in some measure correspond with the great, or be contemned otherwise. Besydes, the hazard of theyre lyves is soe grete that it may easily induce them to anie imployment, or matter of more profitt and safety."

But, after all, had the salaries been twenty times as much, it is a matter of doubt whether in most cases, where opportunity was great, these would have induced more honesty. The rewards of the illicit trade were great and easily come by, and those who have lived long in India know how loose the moral fibre is when bribes, or secret commissions, are in the wind.

In the years 1624–1629 the salaries were:

Presidents and Senior Merchants . . .	£80 to £200
Juniors and Pursers	30 „ 66
Writers	20 „ 40
Bakers, Cooks, and others classed as menials .	18 —
Surgeons and Doctors	40 —
Chaplains	100 —

Of the chaplain's pay only £50 was fixed, the balance being conditional on good behaviour for the year, a precaution rendered necessary by the conduct of certain very unreverend brethren. One curious item in the pay of the factors and pursers was odd sums, one man being paid £33, 6s. 8d. and another £66, 13s. 4d. The reason is not apparent. In addition each man received free board and lodging, and, for the former, a fixed allowance of £9 per head was made, irrespective of rank. When men were travelling, or in remote stations, this board allowance was increased to £25 per head. Besides the fixed establishment there were always a number of probationers and boys, learners, who received from £5 to £12 per annum, and, in addition, men and boys who not only received no pay but were charged

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for their board, which was paid by relatives in England, until they came on the establishment.

In the year 1648 the salaries were increased somewhat, presidents and senior merchants receiving from £100 to £350 per annum, including another odd sum of £133, 6s. 8d. Junior merchants were given from £35 to £80 per annum; writers £15 to £30, and the probationer assistants £6 to £12. The ministers and surgeons stood fast, but the diet money of all was increased from £9 to £20. One hundred years later the salaries had dropped even below the level of 1624–1629, for the president at Calcutta received only £200, senior merchants £40, juniors £30, and writers from £15 to £50 per annum. It would seem that, realising the hopelessness of attempting to stop illicit trading, the Company tried to save what they could in the way of salaries.

THE POMP AND STATE OF THE GOVERNORS

As was necessary, the president kept considerable state, both at home and abroad, for which the Company was charged. Pietro Della Valle, who visited Surat in January 1623, describes their "manner of going abroad."

"The Dutch Commendator and the English President live in sufficient splendour, and after the manner of the greatest persons in the country. They go abroad with a great train, sometimes only with their own men on horseback, but especially with a great number of Indian servants on foot armed, according to the mode with sword buckler, bows and arrows. Moreover these Governors have carried before their coach or horse on which they ride, a very high bannerol, or streamer by a man on foot, and what else is a custom in this country likewise had a saddled horse led before them by a man on foot."

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Another description is that of Ralph Cartwright, a disgruntled merchant, who endeavoured to revenge himself on his enemies by tattling to the Court of Directors. His report, dated 1639, runs thus:

"Mr. Pinson and Mr. Clarke did live at Masulipatam at a very high, and extraordinary rate in the expense of the Companies meanes putting them to the charge of keeping ten horses two oxen, two pallankeenes and sometymes 40, at other tymes 60, and also at other tymes not less than eightie servants belonging to the house. And when Pinson and Clarke had gone out of town together (as was usual), there did ride a trumpeter before them, lykewyse there was two flaggs carried before them, and one of the country fencers goeing before the pallankeenes they rid in.

"After him followed the pallankeenes by whose sides went rundeleeroes carrying broad things like targets to keep away the sun (umbrellas). They were also accompaniyed with horsemen footemen, English and other servauntes, and thus was their manner of goeinge abroad for recreation. Thomas Clarke had belonging to him and did him service usually twenty servauntes and slaves whose wages were payde by the Companie though he sayde onelie in parte. The sayde Clarke also had a howse of his owne wherin was a porter and three other slaves or servants."

Yet this very Thomas Clarke, who is thus pilloried, had only a few months before hectored Thomas Grove, merchant at Patapoli for "prodigallitie," informing him that:

"Wee cannot allow you moore than two servauntes. You bring in the Dutch for exemple, saying they keep two rundeleroes, three torcherers, and sixty peownes with two horse and two palankeenes. It may verie well bee that if wee had soe much inployment for you in that place as they have for theire people, wee mighte allow you as much prodigallitie to oure owne

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thatt should remayne there as chief. Iff you wante a Comprador (broker) you have a servaunte of youre owne thatt may verie well supply thatt place and nott putt the companie to soe unnecessary a charge when they have soe smalle a stock to imploy."

A very worthy precept, though hardly illustrated by example!

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CHAPTER II

THE MARINERS

THE MEN AND THEIR CRAFT—ARMAMENTS AND SCALES—CONDITIONS AT SEA—THE SHIP'S COMPANY—PRIVATE TRADE—DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENTS

THE MEN AND THEIR CRAFT

It is significant of the general standard of the ship-masters who commanded the first voyages that, in addition to their command at sea, they were entrusted with the delicate tasks of negotiating with Asiatic rulers, of founding factories, and trading enterprises.

As for the subordinate officers and men, they were what would nowadays be called a tough crowd, and this was only natural, for only hardy men of coarse fibre, rude tastes and simple wants, could have endured the incessant hard work, the squalid life, and the rude fare of the forecastle in the earlier sailing ships.

Therefore, if sometimes their conduct was not all fancy paints, remember their conditions of life, and that for months at a time they were cooped up within tiny ships. So, if when released to shore with freedom and money, they diverted themselves in a debauched and riotous manner, this was the natural revulsion from the life they had been leading.

Then, consider the vessels in which these voyagers adventured into what, to them, were almost unknown and practically uncharted seas. Towards the end of the seventeenth century we find the merchantmen very slow, leewardly, unhandy old wagons, primitive of design and rig, and little less clumsy than a Spanish

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treasure galleon of the Admiralty. Also, the growing scarcity of suitable timbers for knees and frames. Substitutes were sought for in every direction, but it was found that no wood grown could equal English oak for these purposes, so, as every knee and elbow over a certain size was required for the Royal Navy, this naturally kept down the size of merchant vessels.

On the other hand it may be that the small vessels were a matter of choice and not necessity. The main, if not the only, consideration during the seventeenth century, was cargo, and as small ships filled up quicker, required smaller crews, and were handier to navigate in seas which shallowed a considerable distance from the shore, as at Surat, these considerations regulated the size. A further argument is that when, during the eighteenth century, the passenger traffic from and to India necessitated larger ships, the requisite timber was forthcoming, even though, during this period, naval ships were more numerous, and larger, than ever.

The following analysis of some forty-six, whose tonnage is given during the first half of the seventeenth century, shows the prevailing size:

Between 100 and 159 tons	5
200 and 250 tons	6
300 and 400 tons	12
500 and 600	12
700 and 800 tons	9
900 and 1000 tons	2

Of the sailing qualities of these ships, Lubbock writes:[1]

"Many people think of the vessels of the Stuart period as very slow, leewardly, unhandy old wagons, primitive of design and rig, and little less clumsy than a Spanish treasure galleon. This is altogether an erroneous view, for in many ways these ships were

[1] *Blackwall Frigates*, p. 27.

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superior to the wooden walls of Nelson's Day. They had more beam to length than their successors, more dead rise, and fewer lines. The shipwrights of the 17th century were practical, rather than theoretical; they built by eye, and were not hampered by regulations as to measurements, design, etc."

This must be a correct enough statement, for every practical wood-worker knows that the creations of the drawing-office are not ideal, and very often have to be modified considerably in the process of construction. Unlike the material of the present day, that utilised by the builder of wooden ships permitted of considerable deviation from the original working-drawing, and that individual skill was very important is shown by the marked superiority in sailing of some vessels over others. As the work progressed, the master shipwright could make improvements, or remedy defects not evident in small-scale drawings.

The personal question is instanced by the famous wool and tea clippers of the mid-nineteenth century, and especially the examples of the *Tweed* and *Assaye*, both built to the same plan in a Bombay dockyard, but differing in sailing qualities as a racehorse to a hackney. The *Tweed* was the equal of some of the most famous clippers in America and on the Clyde, and made as good voyages, whereas the *Assaye* never distinguished herself.

The general appearance did not change greatly during the eighteenth century, the only alteration being the gradual lowering of the very high stern common at the beginning of the century to a more uniform sweep from stern to stem, though the latter was still very much lower. It is noticeable that the broad bow sits the water like a duck, a feature which, though it reduced the speed, must have tended to greater sea-worthiness, as the bows rode the waves instead of ploughing through them. Almost to the end of sailing-ship days, the duration of the voyage, out and home,

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remained practically the same, averaging from five to six months, which endorses Lubbock's statement that the seventeenth-century ships were in no way inferior to those of one hundred and fifty years later.

Without exception, the vessels carried an armament of guns and small arms in proportion to their size, and for the former, a master gunner and several assistants, whose functions were purely military. As, in those days and to the end of the sailing-ship period, naval and merchant seamen were interchangeable, most of the crew were quite equal to handling the guns, the laying, etc., being done by the master gunner and his assistants.

The fore and after parts of the vessel, separated by the deep waist, were faced by heavy timbers, loopholed for musketry, and occasionally for a small gun. These were called the "closed" quarters, and into them the crew retreated when the ship was overrun by boarders, and often held out successfully, for, in addition to the fire from closed quarters there were musketeers, grenade and bomb throwers stationed in the circular tops of the fore- and main-masts. The ship's company varied in numbers, but in the early days at least there seems to have been a sort of general rule of one man to about three tons measurement. The actual armament of the vessels comprising the first fleet which sailed to the East is of interest:

The *Red Dragon*.[1]—Tonnage: 600, with a ship's company of 180, including captain, two master's mates, four carpenters, master gunner, nine gunners, two stewards, two cooks, two surgeons, a barber, and 150 men and boys. Armament: 38 guns, comprising two demi-cannon, sixteen culverins, twelve demi-culverins, and eight sakers. (Her small arms are not given.)

The *Hector*.—This was one of the most famous ships of the early East India Company. Tonnage: 300. One

[1] *Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies*, 1599–1603, pp. 14–23, 43–48, 89–90.

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hundred men, including captain, two master's mates, three carpenters, three caulkers, and six gunners, the remainder as in the *Red Dragon*. Armament: twenty-four guns, including twelve demi-culverins, ten sakers, two minions. Small arms: eighteen muskets, three calivers, ten swords, ten long pikes, eleven short pikes, and forty-four musket arrows. This latter item is interesting, for this weapon was highly thought of by Sir John Hawkins, and remained in use up to 1620; some were steel bolts, and it is said had greater penetrating power than the ordinary bullet, but most were used as fire-arrows.

The *Ascension*.—Tonnage: 260. Eighty men, including captain, two master's mates, two carpenters, two caulkers, five gunners, stewards, etc., as in the other vessels. Armament: twenty-two guns, comprising nine demi-culverins and thirteen sakers. Small arms: a "murtherer," with two chambers, and two fowlers, each with two chambers, thirty muskets, sixteen calivers, three arquebuses with crocks, twenty-four long pikes.

The *Susan*.—Tonnage: 240. Eighty men, including captain, two master's mates, two carpenters, two caulkers, five gunners, stewards, etc., as in other vessels. Armament: twenty-four guns, comprising fourteen demi-culverins, ten sakers, thirty muskets, six arquebuses, sixteen calivers, twenty-eight short pikes, thirteen long pikes, twelve bills.

ARMAMENTS AND SCALES

Some of the miscellaneous armaments given in the authority quoted is quaintly interesting, as reminiscent of the pages of Purchas, Hakluyt, and Drake's *The World Encompassed*. We find "base shot," "barr shot," "langrell," "crosse-barre shot," "sturbowes" (cross-bows) and "benders," "boare speares," "fire pykes," "steele targettes," and other weapons long since con-

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signed to the limbo of the has-been, although "chain shot," "barr-shot," and "langrell" were used by Nelson and his contemporaries.

The "harquebus a crocke" was the very first hand-gun ever used, and so heavy and clumsy that it was fired from a crutched rod of iron, either fixed to the barrel or carried in the left hand of the musketeer. "Muskets" were shoulder guns, firing a ball of about sixteen-bore, and the "caliver," a lighter weapon of about twenty-bore. "Murtherers" and "fowlers" were small swivel guns used for boat work, or attached to the bulwarks, usually at the break of the poop, or on the quarters, with the object of repelling boarders or clearing the decks of them. Some of these small guns were actually breech-loaders, the upper part of the breech being cut away to admit of the insertion of a chamber, secured by a bayonet-catch arrangement.

Such guns were in use so far back as the time of Henry VIII, a specimen being recovered from the wreck of the *Mary Rose*, sunk off Woolwich and explored in the late nineteenth century. That they were also used much farther east is apparent from a letter dated 1605 sent from Bantam to Nicholas Downton, which states that "brasse peeces of ordnance with chambers in the breeches are to be had at Bantam,"[1] brought, it is thought, from China.

In view of the various cannon to be hereafter mentioned, the following list of Elizabethan ordnance will be useful, as taken from the *Naval Tracts* of Sir William Monson, a noted admiral of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, whose very bulky treatise was published in 1620.

The surprising fact emerges, that with the exception of names, cannon remained practically unchanged from this period down to the sixth decade of the nineteenth century. The gunners of the Crimea and Indian

[1] *Letters Received*, Vol. I, 1602–19, p. 69

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Mutiny would have found no difficulty in working the guns of Drake's vessels, and obtained no greater range with their own.

MONSON'S LIST OF ORDNANCE

Names	*Calibre*	*Weight of Shot*
Cannon Royal	8½ inches	66 pounds
Cannon	8 „	60 „
Cannon Serpentine	7 „	53½ „
Bastard Cannon	7 „	41 „
Demi Cannon	6¾ „	30½ „
Cannon Petro	6 „	24½ „
Culverin	5½	17½ „
Basilisk	5	15 „
Demi Culverin	4 „	9½ „
Bastard Culverin	4 „	5¾ „
Saker	3½ „	5½ „
Minion	3½	4 „
Falcon	2½ „	2 „
Falconet	2 „	1½ „
Serpentine	1½ „	¾ „
Rabanet	1 „	½ „

	Ranges	
	Point Blank	*At Random (extreme)*
Cannon Royal	800 paces	1920 paces
Cannon	770 „	2000 „
Cannon Serpentine	200 „	2000 „
Bastard Cannon	180 „	1800 „
Demi Cannon	170 „	1700 „
Cannon Petro	160 „	1600 „
Culverin	200 „	2500 „
Basilisk	230 „	3000 „
Demi Culverin	200 „	2500 „
Bastard Culverin	170 „	1700 „
Saker	170 „	1700 „
Minion	150 „	1500 „
Falcon	150 „	1500 „
Falconet	150 „	1500 „
Serpentine	140 „	1400 „
Rabanet	120 „	1000 „

Note.—The ranges do not seem in proportion, nor do the weights agree with those of brass or iron spheres.

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"At random" we take to mean extreme range, or elevation, and it is noticeable that even at this early period, the powder was made up into cartridges, both paper and canvas. Loose powder was used only when the supply of cartridges ran short, and for carrying this, specially made buckets with close-fitting wooden tops were made. One of the most interesting items is "one grinstone with his irons and trough," for "sharpning the swords and pykes."

Equally interesting are the cooking utensils and eating furniture for the crew. We find[1] "a grete kettle of Copper to seeth vittles in for 80 men, pease potts with skimers, frieinge panns, spitts and trivetts, pott hooks, mustard quernes, platters and steepe tubbs." The steep tub was a barrel in which the daily ration of salt beef or pork was steeped in fresh water for a time to remove some of the salt. There are also "grete and smalle basketts for bread, barricoes and firkins for water." The word "barrico" is used even nowadays to denote the small barrel in which water is kept in the ship's boats for cases of emergency.

The furniture was neither plentiful nor luxurious. A table and forms are provided for the great cabin, and "one standinge bed with pillers, vallens, and curtaynes for the merchant," the captain having to be content with a settle bed.

The rations[2] were calculated for the round voyage of sixteen months of thirty days each, and the individual issues to both officers and men, as under:

Bread (or Biscuit)	per day	12 oz.	10 days.
Meal (Flour)	„	16 oz.	
Beef	„	16 oz.	

[1] *Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies*, 1599–1603, pp. 19–20.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 35.

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ALTERNATIVE

Biscuit	12 oz.	300 days.
Pork	8 „	
Peas or Beans	1 pint per man (about 8 oz.)	

FISH DAYS

Bacalhao (Newfoundland dried fish)	14 oz.	90 days.
Oatmeal	8 „	
Biscuit	16 „	

Though the allowances are given in the heading as for 480 days, the total detail amounts to 510, accounted for by the fact that additional biscuit and bread were provided for, in one case for seventeen months, and another for twenty. Besides these fixed allowances, there was a quantity of dry wheat, cheese, butter, oil, vinegar, honey, currants, raisins, sugar, and aqua vitæ, all to be issued "without proportion and at discretion,"[1] probably for cases of sickness or special rations.

The flour was probably made up into that delicacy beloved of the seaman of sailing days, called dough, a delectable compound of flour, slush (grease from the boilers), raisins, currants, sugar, and a little spice, usually boiled along with the meat. We find no mention of potatoes or other vegetables, which, apparently, were not provided, and many months of the kind of food issued must have been extremely monotonous. Vinegar was provided in the proportion of one and a half ounces per man per day, probably as a preventive against scurvy, though it may only have been as a flavouring or counteraction to the salt meat.

The aqua vitæ (brandy) was probably for use in case of extraordinary exertion or sickness, though it must have been very sparingly issued, as it works out as only two and a half gallons per man for the whole 480 days.

[1] *Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies.*

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The liquid ration was liberal, consisting of beer:

Beer	a pottle (half a gallon)	per day
Cider	one quart (alternative)	
Wine	one pint (alternative)	

Beer	120 days
Cider	240 „
Wine	120 „

Though perhaps not over-generous, the food compares not unfavourably in quantity with the scale even now deemed sufficient for the ordinary seaman of merchant vessels, but, owing to the duration of the voyages, it must have been exceedingly monotonous; nor, at times, was the quality any too good, for there are frequent complaints, the most pithy of which is probably that of Captain Bonner of the *Dragon*, who complained that his "beefe, beere, and biskit were all starke and stinking."

Whilst in port the sailors were allowed "foure freshe meales the weake, either fish or flesh, and if butter (ghee?) be deare, let them have salte fishe to eat withe theire rice," the latter apparently being substituted for flour and oatmeal, and the whole made up into what is called kedgeree. As the captains probably made a bit out of the transaction, they were very prone to increase the proportion of fresh provisions, and there are, occasionally, stringent prohibitions of such practices. Rather curiously, the president at Surat remarked:

"Whether eating of fresh fleshe or excessive drinkinge of toddie doe destroye moste of oure mariners iss doubtful, but one of them it iss, seeinge thatt the shippes whiche goe for Persia, find noe suche mortalitie," meaning, of course, that when at sea, both these causes being removed, there was less mortality. But men very seldom die of over-eating, and, with toddy at two annas "the pott," the presumption would lie with the latter.

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Friday was invariably a fish day, and in time these came to be called "banyan days," a term used in the army and navy to denote short commons, and probably derived from the fish and rice-eating Hindu brokers, who conducted most of the shore business of the Company.

CONDITIONS AT SEA

The mortality was excessive, not so much from ordinary sea perils as from the dysentery ("bludie flux") and scurvy induced by a continued diet of highly salted or indigestible food. Even though potatoes and lime-juice were known to be anti-scorbutic, neither was shipped in any quantities except by a few shipmasters, down to the middle of the eighteenth century, and during this long period scurvy exacted a heavy toll from the crews of all ships on deep sea voyages.

The crews were often decimated during the round voyage out and home, and the stay on the coast. Thus, in 1619, Sir Thomas Dale's fleet of seven vessels lost eighty men between the coast of Sumatra and Masulipatam, including Dale himself, his Vice-Admiral Bowers, Nicholas Ufflet (whom we shall meet with Hawkins), three other merchants and two shipmasters, and a little earlier Pring lost thirty men of the crew of his four vessels, and reports that "many more have since died, insoemuch that we are fayne to hire here some 120 or 130 blacks to sail in the fleet." Incidentally, this is the first mention of lascars we have come across. A notable instance of mortality is that of the first voyage, wherein the major portion of the ship's complement died of scurvy, dysentery and malaria.

But there were compensations in the matter of private money, for all such was divided with the crew in a fair proportion. We find Bonner's seamen mutinying for

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a share of the prize money resulting from the capture of two Portuguese frigates, and claiming one-sixth of the total, which amounted to £3772, 2s., "of wiche they were denyed, but were permitted the pillage of the two frigatts." Probably ample compensation. For Shilling's actions off Jask the crew received one-fourth of the value of the captured goods, and in Weddell's and other letters we find mention of substantial payment in prize money to the mariners.

The taking by the *Richard* of a Portuguese vessel gave the fleet mariners £1000, her cargo being valued at £6000; and the *London's* three prizes in the action off Jask in November 1620 yielded the Company £9000, besides the mariners' shares, which was one-sixth more, amounting to about £1500, a nice little sum to be divided amongst a comparatively small number of men.

The pay of the shipmasters ranged from £6 to £10 a month, in exceptional cases as far as £15 being given, though, like the salaries of the landsmen, only one-third of the amount could be disbursed abroad, the remainder being paid only after a committee had pronounced upon the separate cases, and given clear certificates. Master's mates received up to £6 per month, other mates £1, 10s. to £3, and seamen engaged in England, 15s. to £1, 10. per month. As little as 10s. per month was given to men engaged in the country, these latter being probably shipwrecked or distressed seamen, to whom the passage home was probably more of a consideration than the pay.

It will be seen that these rates compared very favourably with those paid to the land staff, the reason being that the mariners, both masters and men, were merely temporary servants, engaged for each separate voyage, whereas the landsmen were more or less assured of employment for a lifetime.

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THE SHIP'S COMPANY

Between the landsmen and seamen was waged a continual and acrimonious warfare, mostly wordy, of which numerous instances are on record, as, for instance, those we referred to in the account of Day and Trumball. Naturally, when anything tended to lower the shipmaster's "infinyte pryde, the merchants, high and low rejoyced exceedingly." Thus when, in 1640, the title of captain, hitherto used by the shipmasters, was forbidden, and the inferior one of 'master' substituted, President Fremlen expressed his pleasure:

"Youre worships rightly apprehend how little the title of Captaine serves to the navigatinge and government of youre shippes and menne at sea, and how muche coast and ceremonie attends thatt denomination, and have therefore tayken a laudable and necessarie resolution to blowe thatt buble downe."

However, the shipmasters took no notice of the order, and still continued to use the superior title.

So far, as regards the seamen, even the meagre wage given was grudged to them by some of the merchants, as, for instance, Andrew Cogan, factor at Masulipatam, and later a knight with a reputation somewhat blown upon for private trade, and other peccadilloes, who writes:

"You shoulde entertayne in each shipp comying hither some twentie thirtie youthes att ten twelve shillinges each monthe; who would bee joyefull toe come thus, and their wages after a five six tenne yeares bee payde them; thus during thiss period you would have the use of thiss money, and these younge menn wolde after a two three yeares purpose better than ancientier menn, to whom you give 20 to 22 shillinges a month."

We have previously remarked that neither merchants nor mariners were particularly correct in conduct, but the seamen seemed to have been the worse of the two,

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probably because they had a greater abundance of animal spirits, or superabundant energy to work off, accumulated during their long voyages. To anyone who has realised or undergone the utter drab monotony of a long voyage on a sailing ship, it does not seem a bit extraordinary that the mariners behaved as those of the *Unicorn* did in 1619. William Methwold writes:

"Wee regrett thatt the mariners have stolen without proportion, solde withoute consideracion (their plunder) and spente withoute discrecion, and in all these behav'd so lyke barbarous outlawes, thatt I feare oure nacion, formerly soe well reputed off, will suffer a perpetual scandall for their moste intollerable misdemeanours. Their private W——gs, drunkennesses, and suche lyke ryotts have onlie prejudic'd their owne soules and bodies and given noe further offence, butt their nighte walkes in armed troupes whenn neyther private person nor publicke officer wolde meete and pass them withoute blowes exchanged, or wounds, the braking open bawdy and rucke howses in ded of night, and despight of their owners have burdened the eares of their chief commaunder with complaintes and hardened the hartes of the inhabitants against their verie names."

Amongst the iniquities charged against the sailors was the burning of the *Black Lion*, a Dutch ship held as hostage for the redress of English grievances, which ship was set afire by some drunken rascals rummaging for more liquor, and the plunder of three Chinese junks, having a cargo valued at 76,000 reals of eight (about £19,000), of which Augustin Spalding reports:

"Almost every basket and hamper had been broken open by the sailors, who have stolen one-half of the porcelain. I thinke worser theives lives not in Newgate then most of the men in this fleete."

Concerning these same reals, or royals, of eight, it is interesting to note that they were variously valued at

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four shillings, four shillings and sixpence, or five shillings, the former for purpose of export duty, the midmost for trade purposes, and the last for paying wages, this being the first instance of that hoary swindle perpetrated on soldiers and seamen serving in the Far East colonies, whereby they were paid in dollars, much above the actual rate of exchange. For instance, we remember receiving in Singapore sterling pay converted to dollars at the rate of three shillings and eightpence, the actual value in the city being three shillings and a penny.

To continue the tale of woe, let us again quote from the same Methwold, sixteen years later.

"December 16th, 1636. Oure shippes are nowe weeklie, and whatt is worse, ill mann'd, particularlie as regards the master's maytes. Some of the worst are turn'd before the maste, and deserv'd noe better, being unfit toe accompanie a boate upp the river toe Suratte, with anie expectacion to see themm againe in tenn days or over, after if their monie will holde out, wiche keeps them particularly soused in racke or toddy iff theye bee not worse (if worse there bee) employ'd, thatt wee have relinquished the convenience of the river rather than endure this scandall toe oure nacion. How they have behav'd themselves inn some of the Portugall ports oure eares have tingled toe have herde relayted; alle of wiche procedes from the master's maytes, who, in place of regulating the reste, debauch'd themm with their badd ensample.

"Manie of these menn have been known toe bee thus condicion'd, but on promise of reformacion they have been re-engag'd in England bye youre goode natur'd commanders and masters, who will have libertie toe engage their maytes; though there bee some exceptions, such as John Shilling of the *Palsgrave*, and Thomas Williamson of the *London*, and a fewe others who deserve toe bee tayken notiss offe as aspiring toe

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preferment, butt the reste onlie looke downe toe see the bottom of a rack bottle or toddy pott.

"Then the pursers are as badde ass the maytes, and aid and abet their private trade as well as lending them monie and thus ensuring their drunkenness. Stille, that state of things cannot be remedied here, for if the pursers bee dismiss'd, their maytes are unfit. The stewards are noe less faultie, butt if theye were discharg'd there are non others to put in their place, so thatt in all cases the remedie will bee worse thann the diesease."

How this worthy old Puritan must have chafed at the conduct of the Gadarene swine an ungrateful Providence and a relieved country had inflicted upon him. Yet if the mariners walked "very wide" ashore, sufficient palliation is to be found in the conditions of their life at sea.

PRIVATE TRADE

The evil of private trade was as rampant amongst the seamen and shipmasters as with the merchants. So early as 1620 we find complaints that the mariners so undersold the Company that it was difficult to find a market for their goods, and that excessive room was taken up aboard ship by the quantity of goods shipped by both masters and men on their own account. It is remarked that "the mariners sell their private cloths at the water-syde to more than ordinarie benefitt . . . and have brought the price downe to three and a halfe mahmudies a seer, . . . and that your pursers and seamen in Captain Weddell's fleet are exorbitant, whereby the prices of all European commodities are muche debased."

The seamen's attitude towards this offence is rather well put in the following quotation, the occasion being the unexpected lingering of the president aboard the

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ship *Discovery*, when about to set sail for England, thus detecting the arrival of two country boats laden with private trade.

"We were more watchful than they expected, which made the owners give order that the boates should putt ofe and so continue till, the ships setting saile, wee should be necessitated to depart. Enquiring into the bussinesse and reveiling the impudencie of the manner, wee found a general grumble, and one of the ordinarie men bold enough to bee mouth for the rest and to defend it saying, Shall not a poore man carry a litle goods to furnish him with cloaths when hee is well and fresh victuall when hee is sicke? In which wayes, hee said, they had almost undone themselves already in Bombay, and might they not now improve the little that was left?

"We answered them with authoritie on our sides, and, before wee had done, found owners for the goods, being for the most part belonging to the officers of the ship."

As regards the masters, their share was naturally greater than that of the men, and fully in proportion to their opportunities.

DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENTS

Discipline aboard the ships was maintained by powers delegated to the Company by the King's Commission and again delegated by them to the ship's officer or council, which was composed of the ship's officers, and the leading merchant aboard, the president being invariably the captain. These punishments are explained by the following extract from Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, which give them as laid down for the Navy in the year 1629:

"A captain may punish according to the offence committed by putting one into the bilboues (irons)

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during pleasure; keep them fasting; duck them at the yardarm or keel-haul them from yard arm to yard arm under the ship's keel, or make them fast to the capstan and whip them there, or at the capstain or main-mast hang weights about their necks till their heart and back be ready to break, or to gag and scrape their tongues for blasphemy or swearing."

We can but agree when he remarks: "This will tame the most crude and savage people in the world!"

Keel-hauling was practised by the culprit being dropped from the yard-arm and hauled under the ship's keel by a rope fastened to his feet, and running through a block on the opposite yard-arm. The punishment was severe, for, in addition to the sudden shock and immersion, there were often severe injuries caused by the sharp barnacles adhering to the vessel's bottom, against which he might be drawn. In extreme cases the man was drawn from stem to stern, though how this was done we have been unable to discover.

Bilbouzeing was confinement in irons on bread and water. Ducking consisted in being dropped from the yard-arm several times. Other punishments were, dragging a cannon shot chained to the ankles for a specified period, and, in addition, swabbing the decks, or performing the most menial offices of the ship. Another punishment was tying neck and heels, though this, after a man had died under punishment and the inflicters been tried for murder, was abandoned. Flogging was a very common punishment, but confined to the biblical number of thirty-nine at a time, a striking contrast to the practice of a century later, when sentences of five hundred to a thousand lashes were quite common in the Company's military and naval service.

As actual instances we find:

"December, 1633. Two of the *Palsgrave's* men, captured whilst trying to escape to Daman (to the Portuguese), are sentenced to receive twenty lashes at

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the side of every ship in the road, with a drum to give notice thereof, and a writing set up at the mainmast."

"November, 1634. Robert Hall and Humphrey Butler, who wilfully stayed behind when the *Jonas* sailed, are to be flogged round the fleet."

"April 9th, 1635. Henry Blinkhorne, master's mate of the *Blessing*, and Thomas Faulkner, boatswain of the same ship, are fined a year's wages apiece, for fighting a duel at Gombroon, in which the former lost his left hand. John Shones, quartermaster of the *Blessing*, is to receive 39 stripes on the bare back for interposing in the quarrel (probably as second). Edward Southern, also belonging to the said ship, is charged with having stolen a box of gold weights from some Persian passengers, with having twice absconded, and with attempting to do so a third time. It is ordered that, when his wounds are cured, he shall receive 39 stripes in this Road, 39 more at the next port, and a further 39 at the arrival of the fleet from England; as also to swab the ship and wear a bolt during the voyage."

"January 3rd, 1639. James Byrcraft, boatswain, is charged with mutinous behaviour and is sentenced to lose his wages from the date of his offence, to be ducked three times from the yardarm, and to be kept in irons during the homeward voyage. P.S.—The ship being about to depart and Byrcraft being brought out to be ducked, the President and Council are pleased to remit this part of his punishment, for a good omen to voyage, that it may begin rather with mercie than inflicting of castigation."

But it must not be imagined that punishments were inflicted at the caprice of the captain or commander, for there were very strict rules to the contrary. A King's Commission authorised the Company to hold councils and inflict punishments, and this authority is delegated by the Company to a ship's council consisting of the captain as president, the ship's officers, and senior

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merchants as members, though the latter were occasionally omitted. As a sample of the instructions issued to commanders, those given to William Weddell, commander of the Persian fleet of January 1633 may be quoted:

"To prevent the aspersions of unjust severity in punishing delinquents, we do prohibit all extraordinary castigations, as bilbouzeing, capsteyning, ducking, or the like to be inflicted on any man whatsoever, unlesse by general consent of Counsell, convocated to consult theron; and then both cryme and pynishment to be recorded and testified under your firmes (signatures) for manifestacion of upright proceeding."

These commissions had power to inflict the death sentence, but only in very exceptional cases, these being when the punishment was absolutely necessary to maintain discipline or inflict a just fear of authority. We find Gregory Lillingstone hanged for murder at Gombroon in 1620, and Owen Bodman, a mariner of the *Black Lion*, who was hanged for setting fire to the ship when in search of liquor. As a typical illustration of the methods followed in trying cases subject to the death punishment, we may quote the proceedings at the trial of Abraham Bryer. The offence was committed whilst on the voyage and the trial reserved until arrival at Surat.

"October 17th, 1636. The accused, Abraham Bryer, and Thomas Mountjoy were brought to trial before the President of the Council. A table being sett foorth upon the halfe decke and a barr made neare to the maine maste, the whole shippes company were called up, and with them the prisoners were brought to the barre. President Methwold read the royal commission empowering trial by martial law, and a jury of twelve men was empanelled, the boatswain being the only person objected to by the accused. . . . The jury found Bryer guilty, and the President sentenced him

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to be hanged at the yard-arm at once, the care of his soul being referred to our minister."

It will be seen that in all cases where the death sentence was involved the case was tried by jury and not left to the discretion of the ship's council. With these remarks we may end this sketch of the lives, manners, and punishments of the mariners of the early days of the merchant venturers.

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CHAPTER III

THE STORY OF WILLIAM ADAMS (1598)

A MAGIC LANTERN—WILLIAM ADAMS, HIS STORY—ABOARD THE DUTCH *ADMIRAL*—WILLIAM ADAMS, *LOQUITUR*—THE SCENE CHANGES

A MAGIC LANTERN

To how many of us will not the narrative of William Adams recall those pleasant days of boyhood when we so absorbedly pored over the fascinating pages of the *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Mariner, of York*, and the veracious chronicle of Captain Lemuel Gulliver, because, for the one, Defoe borrowed the name of Will Adams, mariner, mutineer, and colonist; and for the other, Swift borrowed his adventures for his hero in Japan.

It is an absorbing narrative, which takes us back to the spacious days of Good Queen Bess, when English and Dutch mariners deemed no land too distant to visit, and no sea too dangerous to navigate in search of trade. Fearlessly they steered their quaint and tiny vessels, mostly little larger than a modern yacht, and many much smaller over uncharted seas, and along unknown coasts bristling with rocky perils scarce hidden, or unseen shoals even more dangerous, fringing land inhabited by savages ever eager for the plunder of the vessel and a feast of "long pig" at the expense of the crew.

Many a tale of the early voyagers shows a melancholy story of the slaughter of unwary boats' crews who ventured ashore in such lands for wood, water, or the fresh meats, fruits, or vegetables necessary for men

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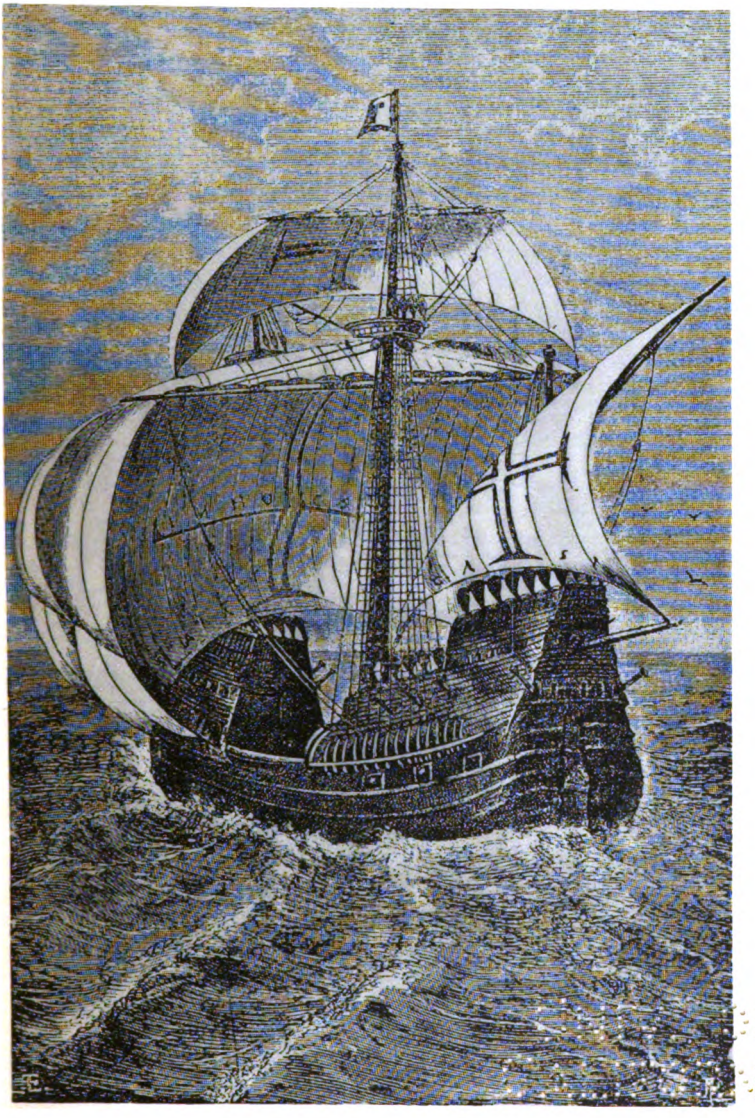

A CARAVEL OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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body-rotted and soul-despairing by an endless diet of salt meat and fish and weevilly biscuit washed down by foul, green-scummed water.

Often, perhaps, tempted by the fascinating glimpse of green wooded hills streaked by cascades or streams of clear water, or by golden beaches fringed by palms laden with blood-purifying nuts the pitiful shipmaster would stifle his legitimate fears, and set his sea-stricken men "aland." Then would follow days of a seeming Elysium on an apparently deserted shore, to be ended, perhaps, by a rush of barbarous foes from the screening jungle, and a swift or lingering death under the eyes of their helpless comrades aboard.

Listen, then, open mouthed, to Will Adams, whilst he unfolds his own Odyssey from the time-worn page whereon over three hundred years ago he inscribed it in Old Nippon, perchance with an albatross quill, as befitted the narrative of an ancient mariner. Herein is an absorbing sequence of wondrous great storms, of perils by sea and land, of scurvy and starvation, of ambushes and massacres, of shipwreck and imprisonment, of death ever threatening, of destruction-intending intrigue by Jesuit and Spaniard, of forgiveness and benefits to foes, of help to Englishmen scurvily requited, of rank, wealth and honour gained from an alien monarch by rigid fidelity and steadfast honesty, closed by an honoured death and a still-lingering memory in a land far, far from Gillingham in Kent "wherby the Kynges shipps do lie."

The theatre darkens; the lights fade out; the curtains draw aside. On the screen there glows a living picture of modern Yeddo, its shores thick with great mercantile buildings and the spacious bay thronged with the floating castles of the Japanese Navy and the merchant marine, great and small, which carry the commerce of an age-old country, awakened to a new life within the last seventy years.

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This picture fades, to give place to another of Old Yeddo Bay, whereon float a few rough-built fishing boats, and the two vessels built by Adams, both the direct ancestors of the great navy just shown to us. Now, in the foreground of the rude town, then little better than a glorified fishing village, appears William Adams, clad in the gorgeous robes of a two-sworded Ronin (Japanese nobleman). A moment's pause, whilst he opens his scroll, and then, from the animate picture, sounds forth the quaint diction and tempest-roughened voice of the Elizabethan seaman, piously opening with "*Laus Deo in Ferando* in Japan."

WILLIAM ADAMS HIS STORY

"The 23rd of October Anno 1611. Having by good occasion heard that certain English merchants do now lie in the Island of Java, though by name to me unknown, I have emboldened myself to write these few lines desiring the Honourable Company to pardon my stoutness.[1] My reason that I do so write is first as my conscience doth bind me and second my duty to my country and love to my countrymen.

"Your Worships, to whom this present writing shall come, will understand that I am a Kentish man, born in the town of Gillingham, two English miles from Rochester, and one mile from Chatham where the King's ships do lie. From the age of twelve I was brought up in Limehouse, near London, being bound 'prentice to Mr. Nico Diggens, and (after that) served as master and pilot in Her Majesty's Ships. Then for eleven or twelve years I served the Worshipful Company of Barbary Merchants until the Indian traffic from Holland of which said I desired to make some experience to add to that knowledge, small though it be, that God had given me.

[1] Stoutness, *i.e.*, presumption.

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"So, in the year 1598 I was hired pilot master to the fleet of five sail made ready by the Dutch Company, it being the 23rd of June when we set sail we arrived at the Line too late for favouring winds and so could not cross until the midst of September. Yet, after so doing we encountered many adverse winds and our men being so many sick we were forced to make our course for Cape Gonsalves on the Coast of Guinea where we set our sick men ashore to refresh.

"Many died of the sickness and few bettered having little or no refreshing[1] so we, to fulfill our voyage set our course for the Coast of Brasill being resolved to pas by the Straits of Magellan. On our course we came to the Island on Annabona which said Island we landed at and took the town which was of about 80 houses. In this Island we refreshed ourselves finding oxen, oranges and divers other fruits. But the unwholesomeness of the air was so great that as one bettered the other fell sick so we resolved to continue our course. We spent on this Coast some two months time, until the 12th or 13th of November at which time we set sail from Annabona.

"The winds were unfavourable until we came to Four Degrees South of the Line, after which they set fair for us. We were between this Island of Annabona and the Straits of Magellan about four months. During this past, one of our sail his mainmast fell overboard by which we were much hindred, until with much toil and trouble we set in the sea a new mainmast. The 28th or 29th of March we saw the land in Latitude of about 50 Degrees, but the wind being for many days contrary we could not make the land so presently hauled off for the Straits to which we came on the 6th of April 1599."

[1] Fresh provisions and vegetables.

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ABOARD THE DUTCH *ADMIRAL*

As the voice dies away let us try to realise that voyage. The scene changes to a raging waste of waters over which, far scattered, the tiny Dutch fleet drives down under scanty sail past the coast of South America to the Straits of Magellan. Rearmost, as befits the shepherd, toils the *Admirall*, a quaint, high-sterned, bluff-bowed, duck-breasted old full-rigged ship of about six hundred tons. Seen from outboard, her lines of bulwark drop from towering after-castle at the stern to the strongly built forecastle within the bows. As their name denoted, both were then veritable citadels, to which after-guard and crew might retreat when almost overborne by boarders, for whose final reception a brace of minions from each castle command the waist.

High on either side of the stern show great lanthorns flanking the jack-staff now bare of its Dutch tricolour. Across and around the stern run the stern galleries, beneath which show the closed ports of a pair of stern-chaser culverins, whilst above, framed by elaborate carving, are seen the arms of the States General. On either side are a double row of ports, each so spaced as not to be above or below another. From the forecastle over the sharply dropping bows, ordinarily project two bow chasers now housed, and sheeted within, all making her total armament some thirty guns, exclusive of the ten rabanets and falconets swivelled to the break of the poop, and a quartette of "murtherers" for use as boat guns.

On the forecastle-head cowers the solitary look-out muffled to the eyes in heavy fearnought garments overalled by a tarred canvas wraprascal coat, and capped by a sou'wester, as hard and near as heavy as an iron casque, from beneath which his breath congeals to icy sleet almost ere it leaves his lips. Away on the star-

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board side his rheumy eyes catch an occasional fitful glimpse of mighty, cloud-capped, snow-clad peaks marking an iron-bound coast, or to starboard the ice blink of mile-long bergs towering hundreds of feet above water and treble that below.

On she drives under single-reefed fore, and mainsails ever and again near rolling her yard caps under, and then rising to a fairly even keel, to stagger on through the gigantic greybeards which thunder incessantly past, now lifting her high on their mountainous crests, now dropping her dizzily down the long slopes to the watery trough, above which the very horizon is but a watery line, until once more she ascends to the reverse crest. Ceaselessly the chilling blasts howl through the ice-cased rigging, pelting sheets, shrouds, and sails with glassy-edged sleet drumming on the tensely strained canvas, to fall and freeze in the bight, till shaken loose by a slant of changing wind.

Above, the sky is canopied by swiftly scudding masses of murky cloud incessantly torn by stabbing forks of orange flame which seem virulently aimed at the labouring ships toiling amid the waste of waters towards a goal almost as desolate. Within the dismal forecastle, lit by an evil-smelling fish oil lamp and reeking with the acrid odour of long-unwashed humanity and the unfragrant memories of past meals of rancid pork, cask-putrid beef, and fish held together by its own strength of smell, dwell the ship's company of some hundred and twenty men or what are now the survivors of that complement.

Along the sides are tiers of gloomy bunks, some filled with helpless wretches clad in frowsy rags and cowering under heaps of tattered, verminous, and dirt-hardened blankets. Anon a feeble croak is interpreted by a mate, who brings a filthy pannikin containing a fluid almost as repulsive. As the wretch opens his mouth we see a toothless gulf edged by festering gums

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set in a livid face blotched with purple cankers that denote that scourge of the deep-sea mariner of olden days, scurvy.

From beneath the bunks and the floor-battens of sea-chests peer the redly glowing eyes of enormous rats, here fearless of men helpless to raise a hand against their intrusion, whilst in every crevice and cranny lurk myriads of cockroaches, ready to sally forth at the first breath of warm weather. Happily, all are not helpless or despairing, for beneath the dim lamp cluster some of the watch below, beguiling the dreary hours with that age-old solace of the deep-sea mariner, a mild gamble for stakes that may be their scanty belongings, but more likely the daily ration of beer or spirits, welcome to the palate jaded with a never-ending diet of monotony, or for the temporary oblivion a surfeit would afford.

From this squalid scene let us cross the waist to the after-castle quarters, past the watch on deck, crouched shivering beneath the bulwarks, but alert for the warning whistle. Before us looms the massively timbered bulk-head, pierced by a sliding door, flanked by the now closed ports for the waist guns. Sliding aside the heavy door we enter to see a great, long cabin, dimly lit by a couple of fish oil lamps, showing a long table crossed by a smaller one at the head, and flanked by long wooden settles. At the head the great leathern chair for the "Generall," flanked by two less pretentious for senior merchant and captain, marks the seats of the mighty.

The remains of the midday meal now being borne away show that all shared alike in the matter of the main viands, though that of the officers, their equals and superiors, was better cooked and served. But where the crew squatted round mess kid or bread basket to help themselves with hook-pot, spearing clasp-knife, or tarry fingers, their superiors ate more daintily from

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pewter mug and platter, though they too used fingers, the fork being yet an unthought-of luxury.

With deferential bows the officers and junior members disperse to their various avocations or to kill time as best they may should they be but passengers, whilst the master-pilot unfolds his quaint sea-chart, whereon the vast expanse of uncharted waters are embellished with spouting whales, gambolling dolphins, or shaggy-headed sea serpents with far-stretching coils, whilst nearer the coast are tall ships in full sail stretching away for their destined bourne. Having pointed out their estimated position and read over his log, the master-pilot retires to the roundhouse, leaving with the "Generall" and his council an even quainter land map whereon the unknown spaces are broken by neat little sketches of lions, tigers, elephants and maybe weird beasts existing only in the imagination of the cartographer, interspersed with legends that "Here be great forests and many elephants teeth procurable"; "here be much gold and diamonds"; or "here be great deserts without store of water," and such like, veiling an equal ignorance of land as of sea.

The daily ritual over, "Generall" retires to his after-cabin, maybe to watch from the stern windows the far-stretching waste of waters, or more likely to pore over his great leather-bound Bible to find comfort for the present and inspiration for the godly discourse which will open the next day's noon meat. Thus indeed was the daily round and common task of the seafarers in search of barbaric pearl and gold, the spices and silks, and the rich products of the Orient for the markets of the West. As the "Generall" drops to his knees to invoke the aid of the Almighty the scene fades out. Once more appears the old Bay of Yeddo, and over the gulf of the ages speaks the small, hoarse voice of Augin Samma (the Japanese title and name of William Adams) again.

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WILLIAM ADAMS, *LOQUITUR*

"So, in the end having the winds good, we came to the Straits of Magellen on the 6th of April 1599. At this time it was winter with abundance of ice and snow and with extreme cold on the one side, and hunger on the other, for our provisions had gone short our men were so weak that though the winds were favourable and we should have gotten through the Straits in six or seven days we were forced to stay for their refreshing. The mean time we wooded and watered and set up a pinnace of some 15 to 20 tons burden.

"At length we would have passed through but now by reason of contrary winds could not, so were enforced to stay and winter in that place amid great store of ice and snow from the 16th of April to the 14th September in the which time our victuals was for the most part spent, and for lack of same many of our men did die of hunger. So, at last we passed through the Straits into the South Sea encountering many great storms by which we were driven down 54 South Latitude where it was at this time very cold.

"At the last we found reasonable winds which we followed on our pretended course to the Coast of Peru. But in this long traverse we lost company, our ships being separated, the one from the other. We had appointed that if by storms or foul weather we should be separated we should go to the Coast in Chili in Latitude 46 and stay there for 30 days. In which height I stayed for 28 days according to agreement where we refreshed ourselves finding the people of a good nature but by reason of the Spanish would not trade with us.

"At first they brought us sheep and potatoes for the which we gave them bills[1] and knives of which they

[1] Hatchets.

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were very glad. But in the end they ran away from their houses up into the country and came to us no more. We stayed there 28 days and set up the pinnace we had brought in our ships in four parts. So, in the end we departed and came to the mouth of Valdivia (Bay) but by reason of contrary great winds could not enter, so directed our course to the Island of Much, the which we came to the next day.

"But, finding none of our fleet there we laid our course for St. Maria the which we came to the next day by the Cape which is but one and half leagues from the Island and seeing many people (shore) luffed about the Cape and finding good anchorage in 15 fathoms in a sandy ground in a fair bay dropped, and went with our boat hard by the water side (beach). But they would not suffer us to land shooting great store of arrows at us. Nevertheless having no victuals in our ships and hoping to find refreshment by force we landed about 27 or 30 men and drove those wild people from the water side, and then, aland, made signs of friendship, though most of our men were hurt with their arrows and in the end came to a parley with signs and tokens of friendship the which the people did understand.

"So we made them signs our desire was for victuals shewing them iron, silver and cloth which we would give in change for victuals. So they gave our people wine with potatoes to each man, and told them by signs to go aboard and the next day to return when they would bring great store of refreshing. So our men came aboard, the next day being the 9th of November 1599 our Captain with all his officers prepared to go aland having taken counsel to go to the water's edge and land no more than two, three men at a time for here people were in abundance being unknown to us, and wild, and not to be trusted.

"Which counsel having been concluded upon, the

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Captain himself did go in one of the boats with all the force we could command in other boats. Being by the water's side the people of the country made signs that they should come aland which at the first did not suit our captain. In the end, the people not coming near to our boats our captain resolved to go aland contrary to what had been concluded on the ship and with 23 men armed with muskets went ashore and marched up to four or five houses that stood about a musket shot from the boats (about eighty yards).

"But the Indians were lain in ambush, and more than 1000 fell upon our men with what weapons they had and slew them all to our knowledge, for though the boats waited for a long time none returned. Knowing all slain, our boats returned with the sorrowful tidings which were much lamented the more because we had scarce men enough left to wind up the Anchor. So the next day we weighed and went over to the Island of St. Maria at which place we found our Admirall who had arrived there four days agone. The day before we had come to the Island of Much he had departed from thence after having the Generall and all his officers slain aland. So now, all our officers were slain.

"The one bemoaned to the other but nevertheless, both glad to see the one the other and that we were so well met together. My good friend Timothy Shotton was pilot in that ship. The Island of St. Maria lieth in the Latitudes of the South of the Line 37 Degrees 12 minutes on the Coast of Chili. We took counsel to take all things out of one ship and burn the other but the Captains, being new-made neither the one nor the other would agree. So as we could not agree to leave either ship, and having much cloth in our ships, it was agreed that we should leave the Coast of Peru, the Spanish ships being out seeking us and having certain knowledge that we were weak in men from one of our

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ships which from hunger, was forced to seek relief at the enemy's harbour of Santiago.

"So, having refreshed ourselves in this Island of St. Maria, our two ships, having no news of the rest of our fleet stood away for Japan passing the Equinoctial Line in 28 Degrees about the 23rd February 1600. We encountered many wondrous storms of wind (typhoons) as ever I was in with much rain, in which we lost our consort wherof we were very sorry. Nevertheless we hoped we should meet in Japan, so we proceeded on our former intention to Japan and in the hight of 30 degrees sought the northernmost cape of that Island, but found it not being set down false in all charts, maps, and globes, being truly in 35½ Degrees.

"In the end in 34 Degrees we came in sight of the land, being the 19th of April so between the Cape of St. Martin and Japan we were four months and twenty two days. At this time there were no more than six men besides myself that could stand on their feet. So for safety we let fall our anchor about a league from a place called Boningo at which time came to us many boats which we suffered to come aboard of us not being able otherwise. But these people did us no harm neither of us understanding the other. Some two or three days after our arrival there came a Jesuit from a place called Langasack[1] in which place the carack of Amakau[2] was yearly wont to come which said with other Japans who were Christians were our interpreters.

"This was not to our good for our most deadly enemies were our own Truchmen.[3] Nevertheless, the King of Bovingo the place to which we had arrived shewed us great friendship he giving us a house aland where we landed all our sick men and with all refreshment that was needful. We had when we came at Bovingo with sick and whole men 24 in all, of whom the next day three died. The rest, for the most part

[1] Nagasaki. [2] Macao. [3] Interpreters.

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recovered, save three who lay a long time sick, and in the end also died. In which time, the Emperor hearing of us presently sent five galleys to us to bring me to court where lay His Highness, distant about five leagues from Bovingo.

"As soon as I came before him he demanded of me what country was I. In all points answered I him. There was nothing that was not demanded of me concerning peace and war between country and country, and other matters which would be too tedious to write here. I was then commanded to prison, but very well used, one of our mariners that came with me being commanded to serve me. Two days later the Emperor called me again demanding of me the reasons for our coming so far. I answered that we were a people that sought friendship with all nations, and to have trade with all countries bringing such merchandise as our country could afford into strange lands by way of traffic, and sale.

"He demanded of me the reason concerning the war between the Spaniards and Portugalls and our country the which I explained to him. So, in the end I was again commanded to prison, but with my lodging bettered. Twenty-nine days remained I in prison hearing no news neither of our ship, nor of our Captain whether he was recovered, nor of the rest of our crew. In which long term of imprisonment, gave the Jesuits and the Portugalls many false evidences against myself and all the rest, saying that we were thieves and robbers of all nations and were we suffered to live it would be against the profit of His Highness, and His country, for such men could not come there without robbing him.

"(Were) His Highness justice thus executed without doubt the rest of our nation would fear and come there no more. Thus daily making access to the Emperor, and demanding my death, and procuring their friends

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to hasten it. But God, that is always merciful at need shewed now his mercy on us, and would not let them have their will of us. In the end the Emperor gave answer to them that as yet we had done to him nor to any in his land any harm, or damage, therefore it was against reason and justice to put us to death. If our countries were at war, that was no just cause that he should put us to death at their behest. With that they were out of heart that their cruel pretence failed them. For which God evermore be Praised.

"Now in the time that I was in prison the ship was commanded to be brought so near the city as she might be without grounding for the Emperor to see her which was done. And 41 days being expired, the Emperor caused me to be again brought before him demanding of me many more question here too tedious to set down. In the end he asked me if I was desirous to go aboard the ship to see my countrymen. I answered: very gladly. The which he bade me do telling them to free me from imprisonment and permit me to depart. This was the first news that I had concerning the coming of the Captain and the ship to the city.

"So with a rejoicing heart I took a boat and went out to our ship where I found the Captain and the rest all recovered from their sickness. When I came into the ship I was with weeping eyes received for they were of belief that I had been executed since long before. Thus God be praised, we saw one another again though in the ship all things had been taken out leaving me nought but the clothes upon my back, all my books and instruments having been taken away likewise. Nor had I alone lost all, for the crew and the Captain were in like case.

"All what was worth the taking had been carried off, all unknown to the Emperor, who when in process of time he had note of it commanded that they who had taken our goods should restore them. But they

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were here and there so taken[1] that we could not get them again saving only some 50,000 rials of eight[2] that was commanded to be given us which was delivered into the hands of one that was appointed our governor to keep in his hands to give us when we shuld have occasion to buy victuals for our men or for any particular charges.

"The Emperor then commanded that our ship should be carried to the easternmost part where was the city the Emperor then dwelt in called Yeddo. At which place being arrived I sought by all means to get our ship clear and to seek our best means to come where the Hollanders were trafficking, in procuring of which I spent most of the money that had been given unto us. In the which time three or four of our men rebelled against the Captain and myself and made a mutiny amongst the rest of our men so that we had a mort of trouble with them. They demanded that they would no longer abide in the ship but everyone do what he thought best, and perforce would have everyone his part of the money that was given by the Emperor.

"In the end the money was delivered according to each man's place (rank) and after about two years[3] each man took his place wher he thought fittest, and (also) in the end the Emperor gave each man two pounds of rice daily and yearly as much as was worth twelve ducats[4] by the year the Captain myself and the mariners all as one. In process of time at the end of four or five years, the Emperor called me as at divers times he had formerly done, as one above the rest and would have me make him a small ship. I answered him I was no carpenter and had no knowledge therof. 'Well, do your endeavour,' saith he, 'if it be not good 'twill not matter.'

"The which ship I built by his command was about

[1] Scattered.
[2] Then valued five shillings each.
[3] *I.e.* since the arrival.
[4] About £5, 10s.

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the burthen of about 80 tuns the same being made in all manner as our usage is. When he came aboard to see it the sight gave him great content. By this means I so came into his favour that he would always have me with him in his presence giving me from time to time presents and in the end a yearly stipend to live upon which was about 70 ducats.[1] So, in the end, being in such great favour by reason I learned him some points of Geometry and understanding of mathematica and such other things which pleased him, so that what I said he would not contrary it so that my former friends and enemies likewise did wonder, and entreat me to do them a friendship which to both Spaniard and Portugall I have done, so recompensing good for evil.

"So to pass my time I made shift to get my living I did. It hath cost me great labour and trouble in the first, but at the end God hath blessed my labour. In the end of five years I made supplication to the King to depart this land desiring to see my poor wife and child again according to conscience of nature, the which request the Emperor was not pleased withal, and bade me bide my life in his land. In process of time I being still in favour, again made supplication by reason that the Emperor had received tidings that the Hollanders were in Spain and Puttania which rejoiced me with the hope that God would bring us to our own country again. So again I made supplication, and boldly made discourse with him to the which he made no answer.

"I told him, if he would let me go, I would be the means that the English and the Hollanders would come and traffic there which he was much desirous of. But by no means would he let me go. I then asked him for the Captain the which he presently granted. So that by my means the Captain got leave, and in a Japan junk he sailed to Johore and Puttania and there found a Holland fleet under General Mattalieff in the

[1] £35.

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which fleet he was made master again. But when this fleet sailed to Malacca and fought with an armada of Portugalls in the battle he was shot and presently died, so that there may be no certain news of me, whether I be dead or alive.

"Therefore I do pray and beseech you in the name of Jesus Christ to make known my being here in Japan to my poor wife and two children for in a manner my poor wife is a widow and my children fatherless, which thing only is my grief and conscience. I am a man not unknown in Limehouse and Ratcliff by name to my good master Mr. Nicholas Diggens and Mr. Thomas Isaak and Mr. Will Isaack brothers with many others also Mr. Thomas Best and Mr. Nico' Jones and Mr. Beckett. Therefore, may this letter come to their hands or the copy of it. I do know that compassion and mercy is so that my friends will be glad that I do still live in this vale of sorrowful pilgrimage. The which thing I do again desire for Jesus Christ his sake.

"You shall understand that in this first ship I did make I did make a voyage or two in the same. Then the king commanded me to make another being in burden 150 tons in the which ship I did make a voyage from Yeddo to Miakoto, being as far from London to the Lizard[1] in the year 1609. Which said ship the Emperor lent to the Governor of Manilla to go with 80 of his men to Acapulco. In the same year was cast away a great ship called the *St. Francisco* about the burthen of 1000 tons on the Japan coast in latitude 35 Degrees 50 minutes. By distress of weather she did cut overboard her mainmast and bore up for Japan. In the night the ship unawares ran ashore and was cast away with 36 drowned and 350 saved. In this ship was the Governor of Manilla going to Nova Spania with intent to return to Spain.

[1] About the same distance.

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"In anno 1610 returned to Acapulco the ship that I had made, and in Anno 1611, the Governor sent another in her place with a great present and embassage to the Emperor, and also the present in goods and money which the Emperors ships were worth. The last ship that I made the Spaniards have now in the Phillipines. Now for my service that I have done and do daily being employed in the Kings service the Emperor hath given me a Lordship with 80 or 90 husbandmen that are my slaves or servants, the like of which was here before never given to any stranger. Thus hath God provided for me after my great misery. To Him only be Honour and Praise, Power and Glory, both now and for Evermore, World Without End.

"Now whether I shall come out of this I know not until this present for though fain would I, thare hath been no means (of sending a letter); but now through the Hollanders there is means. In Anno 1609, there came to Japan two Holland ships with intent to take the carack that cometh yearly from Acapulco. Being a four or five days late (having missed it) they came to Ferando where they were in great friendship with the king, and having made condition to send a ship yearly departed away. Now in 1611 is come another small ship with certain commodities which were wondrous well received.

"You shall understand that the Hollanders have here an Indies of money for they need not to send silver into the east Indies for here is much Gold and Silver for to exchange for commodities, merchandise being always ready money. So now, by this ship new come that my countrymen merchants and mariners both perforce must know me I am emboldened to write these few lines not desiring to be over tedious.

"Thus to be brief I am constrained to hope that by one means or the other I shall in process of time have news from one good friend or another of my good

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acquaintances, my wife and children by the which means I shall before my death hear news, or see some of my friends again. The which thing may God turn it to his Honour and Glory.

"Dated in Japan the 23rd October
Anno 1611
"By the unworthy friend and servant
William Adams."

THE SCENE CHANGES

The voice dies away, the scene fades and changes to the Council Hall of the Court of Committees in Leadenhall Street. Around the table sit the ruffed and fur-trimmed gowned councillors of the Adventurers of the Third Joint Stock, weightily discussing the wonderful tidings of an Englishman high in favour at the Court of Japan, whose influence has been promised to further their trade interests in this yet untried but potentially rich sphere, barely tapped by their Dutch rivals. A grant of twenty pounds, being a tiny sprat to beguile a fat mackerel, is made to the wife of William Adams, and orders given to fit out a fleet to establish a factory at Ferando.

Accordingly, a fleet, consisting of the *Hector*, the *Clove*, and the *Thomas*, all well tried on the Eastern route, left the Downs in March 1612 and arrived at Bantam in October of that same year. After a stay of some months there Captain John Saris, the general of the fleet, who had been provided with letters to William Adams, and others from both the Company and King James, the latter in return for a substantial consideration, left with the *Clove* for Ferando, before which town he dropped anchor on the 12th June 1613. Knowing nothing of the departure of the fleet, and even unaware that his letter had reached England,

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William Adams was, at the moment, with the Emperor some two hundred and fifty leagues up country.

Though, as Adams records, "after receiving notice of the coming of the General to Ferando, with all speed I repaired to the place where had arrived the Ship," he did not arrive until the 29th July, a delay which considerably annoyed Saris, who did not relish having to await the convenience of one whom he must have regarded as merely a glorified beachcomber. The relations between the two from the commencement were strained, and matters were not improved by the discovery of the established footing obtained by the Dutch, and the fact that the merchandise brought out, consisting chiefly of cloth, was unsaleable, being little better than the local product.

However, arrangements were made for Saris and Adams to interview the Emperor with the object of presenting the introductory letter provided by King James, recommending the Company for permission to establish a factory, and for a grant or privilege and protection. On arrival at the court a difficulty arose concerning the presentation of this letter, for, according to court etiquette, no foreigner was allowed to have personal contact or an interview with the ruling prince. Adams had warned the general on this matter, but, none the less, Saris took it as a personal affront when he was refused the interview, and directed to hand over his letter to the personal secretary. Adams narrates:

"After pausing awhile the General caused me to tell the Secretary that could he not deliver the letter himself, he would go to his lodging and come no more. With which answer the secretary was much discontented, and so the matter rested. But presently the Emperor came forth and the General was brought before him, who bade him welcome of so long a journey, receiving his Majesty the King of England's letter from the hands

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of the secretary. So after a while the General departed and I was called in.

"The which the Emperor having read all his demands, told me he should have them having heard much talk of his coming. I told him the Company wished to settle a factory in his land. He asked me in what place. I told him not far from his Court or the King's Court (the local ruler). Now, finding the Emperor in a good mood I took out of my bosom his broad seal concerning certain lands (the grant) and laid it before him giving his Majesty my most humble thanks for his great favour shewn unto me, and desiring leave to depart to mine own country. At which he looked on me most ernestly for a time, and asked me if I really desired to go to my own country.

"I answered 'Most desirous.' He answered if he would detain me 'gainst my will he would do me wrong insomuch as in his service I had behaved myself well, and gave many other words of commendation, the which I leave. So, at length Thank the Lord I got my leave from my long and evil service, with which I took my leave from the Emperor he bidding me that if I did not think well of going this year I should tarry until some other shipping came and go as I would, also bidding me if I came again to bring certain merchandise he named."

The difference in the estimation in which Adams was held and the bare courtesy shown to himself rankled bitterly with Saris, so not only did he treat his associate with very scant courtesy during the journey down to the coast, but ignored his very existence for fifteen days after their return to Ferando. At the end of this period, finding that Adams treated him in like manner, Saris sent for Adams. What passed is thus related by the latter:

"The Cape Merchant[1] with others being in presence

[1] An additional title for the principal merchant, Saris.

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having written certain lines on a side of paper, called me to account, and to know what my intent was whether to go home with him or to tarry in this country. I answered him that my desire was to go home to mine own country. He asked 'with him, or no.' I again answered that I had spent many years in this country though which I was poor, for which case I was desirous to get something before my return. He asked me would I serve the company. I answered him, Most willing. He asked me on what condition. Whether I would accept the £20 of gratis which the Worshipful Company had lent my wife, and myself stand to their courtesy (accept what else they offered).

"I answered that the £20 would be repaid by the goods I purposed to send home in this ship—and having no more to say went home to mine house." So the matter rested for some days, neither party definitely stating their terms, until by the mediation of Richard Cocks, who was to have charge of the new factory, terms were arranged as follows. Cocks wrote direct:

"Mr. Adams is now entertained in the service of the Worshipful Company for a couple of years till news cometh of the safe arrival of the *Clove* at London. He would not be entertained under £100 sterling per year. The Flemings being determined to get him from us, made him the more firmly stand upon his points."

Adams, in a separate letter, writes:

"The reason I would not go with him in the *Clove* was by divers injuries done to me, the which were very strange and unlooked for, which things to write about I forbear leaving it to others to make relation of. Your Worships shall understand I thought to come home in the *Clove* but by reason of the discourtesies offered to me by the General I changed my mind. God send the ship home to make relation therof. So I have agreed with God's blessing on my labours that

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I should be a profitable servant to your Worships, which same I hope in Almighty God I shall be."

But the quarrel with Saris, whatever it may have been, seems perhaps to have been merely an excuse for remaining in Japan. Though, probably, when the opportunity first offered, Adams may have been anxious to return to England, reflection must have shown him that he had far more to lose by quitting Japan than he would gain by going home. In Japan he was a wealthy man, enjoying high consideration with the greatest in the land, whereas in England, after the nine days' wonder at his experiences had died away he would become merely an ancient, poor, and decayed mariner, saddled with a wife he had perhaps long since ceased to care about, in all these years of hardship and adventure. Further, he now had a Japanese wife, by whom there were two children.

His plea of poverty might sound false, but the fact was that the land and slaves he possessed were granted by the State, which would certainly resume them when he left Japan, leaving him as poor as when he landed, for such money as he possessed would have to be left for the support of his Japanese wife and family. Hence his plea of poverty was correct. As showing his disinclination to return to England, remains the fact that, after the two years' agreement with the Company had expired, he remained on in Japan, even though he was entitled to a free passage home.

At the expiration of his contract he went several voyages on the Company's account and his own until the year 1618, in which he accompanied Richard Cocks to the court of the Emperor to endeavour to obtain special concessions for the factory at Ferando, then sorely harassed by their Dutch rivals. But times had changed. The old Emperor who had so befriended Adams was dead, and his throne held by one who was a bitter enemy to all Christians, and opposed to the

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settlement of foreigners. He had suppressed Christianity by drowning, crucifying, and murdering whole communities, and by expelling the Jesuit missionaries.

By a shameful denial of their religion, which is alluded to in *Gulliver's Travels*, the Dutch had managed to obtain permission to remain, and also, by their usual unscrupulous methods, managed ultimately to oust the English who, in 1620, closed their concern and finally left Japan. On the occasion now referred to, the reply of the new Emperor was unequivocal, for he said: "The English have as great privileges as any other strangers, wherewith they must remain content. If they found not trade to their contentment they may depart when they choose, and seek better elsewhere."

In the year 1619 Adams went his last voyage to Cochin China, this time again on the account of the Company, though even then a sick man, as recorded by his friend Richard Cocks, who throughout writes about him in the highest of terms He returned in January after a four months' absence and took to his bed, "a very ill man." The end is thus recorded by Cocks: "*Laus Deo in Ferando* in Japan 16th of May 1620.

"This day died our good friend Captain William Adams leaving William Eaton, and myself Richard Cocks his executors with instructions that half his estate was to go to his wife and child in England and the other moiety to the son and daughter he hath in Japan. A copy of the will hath been sent home by Captain Pring. We cannot but be sorrowful for the loss of such a man as Captain Adams who was in such favour with two Emperors as never was any Christian in Japan, or any country in these parts of the world, and might freely have entered and had speech with the Emperors themselves when many Japanese Kings stood without and could not be permitted. This Emperor hath confirmed to his son in Japan all that which the

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other Emperor gave to the father. The Worshipful Company hath lost a true friend."

So passed William Adams. There, far from his own land, lies in a tomb still existing and carefully tended, the body of "Augin Samma," his spirit, perchance, rejoicing over the great fleets that crowd the harbour of Yeddo, below his tomb on the hill slope. Before his advent Japan possessed no sea-going ships, and but a few coasting junks, consisting of masses of timber clumsily put together, as testified to by the Portuguese. Yet forty years later Japanese ships of European model were to be found in all the Eastern ports, and not a few ravaged the seas as pirates. Who, then, can deny that the claim made on behalf of William Adams to be the "Father of Japanese shipping" is not solidly based on facts.

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CHAPTER IV

THE AMBOYNA TRAGEDY (1622)

THE "FAULT OF THE DUTCH"—AT AMBOYNA—THE TORTURE OF THE BRITISH—THE WICKED SENTENCES—THE MURDER OF THE BRITISH—THE DUTCH "PROCÈS-VERBAL"—ALLEGED NEGLECT OF THE KING

THE "FAULT OF THE DUTCH"

AMONGST the curiosities of literature that burrowing in the remoter shelves of old-established libraries has brought to the hand of the author of this collection, is a small book of some two hundred pages, containing curious adventures and incidents which was compiled by R. Hall, Esq., B.D. of Oxon., and published by the Book Sellers Company of London and Westminster in the year 1712, and now in Lahore.

To find such a survival of the early eighteenth century in a place so remote from the land of its birth as Lahore is wonderful enough, but, could we but know it, the story of its many owners and wanderings since it was "Bott at an auction for 1/9.s by John Galton, D.D. of Taunton Grove" in the year 1719 may be even more wonderful, or at least interesting. Through how many hands and how many lands and by what tortuous routes has the quaint old book passed and travelled to Lahore since that far-off day when John Galton inscribed his name on the title-page in ink almost as black as when it was first used.

Though the worthy Bachelor who compiled the book does not say so, his account of the Amboyna tragedy is a literal transcript of "The True Relation of that Most Unjust Cruel, and Barbarous Proceedinge of the

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Dutch against the English at Amboyna," which was first printed in 1624 and reprinted with an address to the Lord Protector Cromwell in 1651. A reprint, attempted in 1639, had been prohibited, it is said, by Charles I, and, as the only copy known to exist is in the British Museum, the transcript by Hall is especially useful as a contemporary account.

Probably with the view of accentuating the ingratitude and treachery of the Dutch, the "True Relation" opens with a recapitulation of the many benefits conferred on them by the English since the year 1581, when "England was the only place they had left for a sanctuary, whether they sent their Ambassadors with offers to Queen Elizabeth to accept the Sovereignty of their Provinces; but that Heroick Princess intending herself anything (nothing) but the Honour of Relieving her poor Distressed Neighbours in the year 1585 took them under her Protection upon the following Articles:

"1. That the Queen should send them 5000 foot and 1000 Horse into the Netherlands to fight for them.

"2. That they should pay her ten per cent. for all sums of Money, she lent, or disbursed to them, with Interest upon Interest (compound interest) and five Pounds for every English Gentleman, or Officer who should die in their service.

"3. For what money her Majesty should reimburse for them (security), the Brill, Flushing, and the Castle of Ramekins should be delivered into her hands."

The Queen, in performance of her agreement, sent them five thousand foot and one thousand horse under the command of the Earl of Leicester, who had the cautionary towns delivered to him, and Casimir, the Elector Palatine's son, brought down to the assistance of the States an army of fifteen thousand horse and foot, which was raised at the "Great Charges, and Experience of the English." Here we omit the long and discursive account of the Spanish Wars in the Netherlands with

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the exception of the following anecdote, of which the usually accepted heroine is Queen Isabella of Spain and the siege that of Gibraltar.

"Ostend, which was not walled 'till the Low Country Wars, and then with a Mud Wall only, and that not finished until the Arch Duke sat down before it; insoemuch as the Arch Duchess, his wife made a Solemn Vow not to Shift Herself, till the Town was taken; but had her Husband made her keep that Oath, she would have been Lousy for the Town being Garrisoned by the English, under to command of Sir Horatio Vere, who was the Governour therof, held out against the Arch-Duke a Siege of Three Years, and Three Months, and at this Siege the Spanish lost 100,000 men."

Amongst other benefits or concessions to the Dutch was permission to fish in waters belonging to or controlled by the English, through which they were alleged to have made a profit of £8,000,000 in six years from fish caught on the English coasts and off Newfoundland. "By reason of their multitude of ships and mariners, they have extended their trade to most parts of the world exporting for the most part, our herrings and other fish in all their voyages, for which in exchange they return several commodities. A great part of this fish they sell for ready money which they bring home, and then recoin of a baser alloy under their own stamp which advances them a great profit; and all this Wealth, Richness, and Grandeur is derived to them from the bounty of the English."

But whatever wealth the Dutch had gained seems only to have been a just reward for their skill and energy in the exploitation of fisheries the English themselves were either unable or too indolent to work themselves. For this no blame attaches to the Dutch, but rather the reverse. Far different was it with their methods in foreign trade or colonial expansion, for here they were

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ruthless, cruel, and especially treacherous and unscrupulous, brooking no competition and sparing no means to rid themselves of it.

The fundamental difference between the Dutch and the English was that the former, having once obtained a trade footing, made or attempted to make it an absolute monopoly by conquest of territory, usually accompanied by bloody wars, ruthless massacres, and a permanent terrorising of the land they had taken by establishing strong forts, mostly garrisoned by European soldiers, and native auxiliaries, drawn from tribes hostile to those whose lands they now occupied.

On the other hand, the English attempted no conquests, temporary or permanent, always relying on legitimate and honest trading methods and friendly relations with the natives with whom they traded. They kept no European soldiers, and the Japanese, who are mentioned as such, were but watchmen armed in the native style and untrained as soldiers. Therefore, the expenses of the English were small compared with those of the Dutch and they commenced to flourish, whereas their rivals became heavily indebted. To wit, the petition to Cromwell concerning reparations for the general treatment of the English by the Dutch, and the robberies committed upon them relates that:

"In Anno 1617 the Dutch were in a low condition and much in debt, but the English had a stock underwritten of £1,600,000. The States General of Holland in order to preserve their Company and enable them to carry on their trade, lent, or gave them ten or twelve tons of gold. Herupon, they being in want of stock began to surprise the English ships, and took in all eleven vessells scattered about of their voyages all of which were estimated as worth £600,000 or £700,000.

"Yet, when the Treaty for mutual defence and the partition of trading spheres with a proportionate share of expenses was made, in Anno 1619, the Hollanders

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came off for £80,000 paid for these robberies, and were much enriched thereby, whilst the English Company were much discouraged and their adventurers impoverished in consequence. The Treaty aforesaid was evaded by base manœuvres, and despicable expedients, in that the Dutch made the share to be borne by the English so disproportionate and oppressive that on this being represented to the Company in London they decided to abandon trading in the Banda Islands, and the Moluccas, and orders to withdraw were on their way out when the Dutch by a base travesty of law, and perversion of justice cruelly slew our merchants and servants."

AT AMBOYNA

The "True Relation" runs:

"About the 11th of February 1622, a Japaner belonging to the Dutch, walking one night came to the Centinell, who was a Dutchman, and among other talk asked about the strength of the castle and the numbers therin. This Japaner for his conference with the Centinell was arrested on suspicion of treason and put to the torture, whereby as the Dutch pretended, he was brought to confess himself and several of his countrymen to have contrived a conspiracy to take the castle. Upon this the other Japaners were examined and tortured together with a Portugall who had charge of the Dutch slaves, and this examination lasted four days during which time the English passed to and from the Castle on such occasions as business required, and saw the prisoners and heard the tortures and knew of the crimes laid to their charge, but all the while little suspecting that the matter concerned them never having had any conversation with the Japaners, of the Portugall aforesaid.

"At the same time was one Abel Price, a surgeon, a

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prisoner in the castle for offering in his drunkenness to set a Dutchmans house afire. Him the Dutch fetched and showed some of the Japaners they had most greviously tortured, and told him they had confessed the English were partners in the conspiracy, and that if he would not confess, they would serve him worse than they had done the Japaners; so, having given him the torture they quickly made him confess to whatever they asked him.

"This was on the 15th of February O.S. and about nine of the clock, they sent for Captain Towerson, and the rest of the English that were in the Town to come to the Governor in the Castle. They all went but One whom they left to keep House. Being come to the Governor he told Captain Towerson that himself and other of his Nation were accused of a conspiracy to seize the castle and therefore until further Orders were to remain Prisoners; then they sent for him that was left at Home in the House, and took all the Merchandise of the English Company into their own Custody by way of Inventory, and seized all the Chests, Books, Writings, Boxes and other things in the English Warehouse and afterwards committed Captain Towerson to his Chamber under a Guard of Dutch Soldiers."

TORTURE OF THE BRITISH

"Emmanuel Tomson they kept Prisoner in the Castle, and the rest, *videlicet*, John Beaumont, Edward Collins, William Webber, Ephraim Ramsay, Timothy Johnson, John Fardo, and Robert Brown were sent aboard a Dutch ship riding in the harbour, and all made fast in irons. The same day the Governor sent to two other factories in the same island to apprehend the rest of the English there; so that Samuel Colson, John Clark, George Sharrock, that were found in the Factory at Hitto, and Edward Collins and John Sadler

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at Larica were all brought prisoners to Amboyna the 16th of February and upon the same day John Powel, John Wetheral, and Thomas Ladbrook were apprehended at Cambello; who also were brought in irons to Amboyna were William Griggs and Ephraim Ramsay at Lobo on the 20th the same month."

When the whole of the English in the Moluccas were collected at Amboyna their examination began. Each was separately interrogated, but one and all having protested utter ignorance of any plot, the Dutch, determined on extracting some kind of a justification for executing the Englishmen, adopted another scheme.

"Edward Collins was then called in; they told him that those who had been formerly examined had confessed that he was accessory to the Plot for taking the Castle; which when he denied with Solemn protestations of his Innocency, they made his hands and feet fast to the rack; bound a Cloath about his Throat ready to be put to the Torture by Water. Being thus prepared he prayed to be loosed, and he would confess all; but being let down again he protested his Innocency as before and withal told them that because he knew by Torture, they would make him confess whatever they pleased though never so false, he desired what they would have him say, and he would confess it on purpose to avoid the torture.

"The Fiscal herupon said 'What. Do you mock us' and ordered him up again and then they gave him the Torture by Water which he, not being able to endure long prayed to be let down to make his Confession. Then he paused a little with himself and told them that about Ten Weeks before, he Tomson, Brown, and Fardo had plotted with the help of the Japaners to surprise the Castle. Here he was interrupted by the Fiscal who asked him if Captain Towerson was not of the Conspiracy. He answered No. 'You lie,' then said the Fiscal. 'Did he not call you all to him and tell you

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that the daily abuses of the Dutch had caused him to think of a Plot, and that he wanted nothing but your Consents and Secrecy in it.'

"Then said John Joost a Dutch merchant that stood by 'Did you not all swear on the Bible to be secret to him.' Collins falling on his knees protested that he knew nothing of the Matter upon which they ordered him to be trussed up again, which made him confess that all was true that they asked him. Then the fiscal demanded whether the English in the Rest of the Factories were not Confederated in this Plot to which Collins answered that he knew nothing of it. They then asked him if the President of the English at Jacatra or the Agent at Banda, Mr. Welden, were not privy to this Plot but again he solemnly protested that he knew nothing of the Matter.

"And they knowing themselves that the aforesaid English President, and Mr. Welden were both of them at Amboyna and in Company with the Governor and several others that were then present at the very instant when they pretended that the Plot was projected by Captain Towerson; so they thought it not convenient to put him to Torture to Confess those Persons guilty of the Plot; when they were seen by most if not all of the Inhabitants of Amboyna at the very time they pretended the Combination was held.

"These Consideration obliged them to keep to their Old Story wherupon the Fiscal was ordered to Finish the Examination, who immediately proceeded and asked the Prisoner, by what means the Japaners were to put this Design into Execution; but which Collins pausing to devise some probable fiction the Fiscal helped him out saying 'Should not two Japaners have gone to each point of the Castle, and Two to the Governor's Door, and while the Hurly Burly had been without, and the Governor coming out to see what was the matter the Japaners were to have killed him.'

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"Here one that stood by said to the Fiscal 'Do not tell him what to say, but let him speak for himself.' But, however the Fiscal, without staying for an answer to the former question asked what the Japaners were to have for their reward; Collins answered One Hundred Reals Apiece. Lastly he asked him when this Plot should have been effected (when carried out) and though he answered him not, not knowing what to devise immediately yet he was dismissed and very glad to come Cler of the Torture, although he sure he would lose his Life for the Confession.

"Then was J. Clerk that came from Hitto with Colson fetched in and a littel while after was heard by the rest that were in the Hall to cry out amain, for they tortured him with Fire and Water for the space of Two hours. The manner of his torture was as follows. First they hoisted him up by the hands with a large Cord upon a large door where they fastened two Stables of Iron fixed on both sides. At the top of the Door hauling his Hands one from the other as wide as they could stretch them then they fastened his feet as far asunder as they could and made them fast on either side of the door.

"Then they bound a Cloath about his Neck and Face that little or no Water should go by. Then they bound the Cloath very tight which done they poured Water slowly on his Head until the Cloath was full up to the Mouth and Nostrils, and somewhat higher so that he could not draw Breath, but he must suck in the Water, which still being continued to be poured upon him slowly, forced all his inwards Parts to come out of his Nose Ears, and Eyes, till at Length it took away all his Breath, and brought him into a Swoon.

"They then took him down, and made him vomit up the Water again, and when he was come a little to himself they drew up him again, and poured the Water as before taking him down as often as he seemed to be

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stifled. In this manner they handled him, till his body was swelled thrice as big as it was before, his Cheeks were like a pair of Bladders, and his Eyes staring and strutting out beyond his Forehead. Yet he bore all this without Confessing any thing, insomuch that the Fiscal and the Tormentors Reviled him saying that he was a Devil. Therupon they cut his hair very short supposing that he had some witchcraft hidden amongst it. Afterward they hoisted him up again and then burnt him with lighted Candles under the Armpits until his Intrals might evidently be seen, and after that, below his Elbows and in the Palms of his hands and in the bottoms of his Feet until the moisture therof had put out Four Candles the one after the Other.

"At the last when they found out that he would make no Handsome Confession of himself, the Fiscal, to help him out rehearsed some particular Circumstances which he and the others had framed for that purpose, to which he for fear of further Torment answered 'Yes' to all their interrogations. And amongst the Rest of the questions which they put to him was this 'Did I not swear upon the Bible' (says the Fiscal) 'that I would assist Captain Towerson in Delivering the Castle of Amboyna out of the Hands of the Dutch.' Yes, you did, cryed the Poor man almost Dead with Torments, Swear on the Bible that you would assist him; which to be sure was as true as Any of his Answers to any of the Other Questions that they had asked him.

"Having thus martyred this Poor Man they sent him out by Four Blacks, who carryed him to a Dungeon, where he lay Five or Six Days till great Maggots crept from him in a loathsome Manner. Thus having finished their Sabbath Days work and it now growing Dark they sent the Rest of the English, first to a Blacksmiths Shop where they were Loaden with Irons, and then to the Loathsome Dungeon where Clark and the Rest were lying in the Putrefaction of their Tortures.

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"Then was Captain Towerson brought to Examination and shewed what others had Confessed of him of which he deeply Protested his Innocency; when S. Colson was sent for to Accuse him who being told that unless he would make Good his former Confession against Captain Towerson he should be put to the Torture again; but he Re-affirmed the same in such a trembling manner that he was sent back. Then they brought Griggs and Fardo to justify their former Confession to his Face; but Captain Towerson seriously charged them, as they would answer at the Day of Judgement that they should speak Nothing but the Truth.

"Both of them instantly fell down on their Knees before Him begging Him for God's sake to forgive what they had said against them, speaking openly before them all said that what they had Confessed against him was very False, and only spoke on purpose to avoid Terrible Torments with which they saw the others tortured. With that the Fiscal and the rest ordered them to be put to the Torture again which they were not willing to endure and Re-affirmed their former Confessions to be True. When they were required to set their Hands to their Confessions 'Upon whose head, says one of them to the Fiscal will this lye, whether upon theirs who were constrained to Confess what was false or upon those who so Constrained them.

"'Well,' continued the other Prisoner, 'You make us accuse ourselves and others of what is as False as God is True. But God is Witness that we are as Innocent as the Child unborn. Now (with them) they have Examined all that belonged to the several Factories in the Island of Amboyna. Thus have I given you all the Examinations, Tortures, and Confessions being the work of Eight Days after which was Two Days respite before the Sentence of Death was passed on

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them. John Powl, being acquitted went to visit J. Fardo one of those who had accused Captain Towerson.

"To him Fardo solemnly protested his Innocency, but More especially his Sorrow for Accusing Captain Towerson, for, said he, the Fear of Death does nothing Terrifie me for God I trust will be merciful to my Soul according to the Innocency of my Cause. The only matter that Troubles me is that through Fear of Torment I have Accused that Godly and Righteous man who was so Honest and Upright to all men that he owed no Ill will to any. Much less would he Attempt any such Wicked Design as he is Accused of, He further said he would receive the Sacrament in Acknowledgement that he had Accused Captain Towerson wrongfully and only through Fear of Torment.

"About the 9th of March all the Prisoners as well English as the Portugall and the Japaners were brought into the Great Hall of the Castle where they received their Condemnation except Powel, Ramsay, Ladbrook, and Saddler, formerly acquitted. Captain Towerson all the Time of his Imprisonment was kept from the rest that none should speak to him Except one Thos. Johnson who got in by Favour of the Keepers that desired him to Acknowledge a Debt which Captain Towerson had Contracted on Behalf of the English Company."

THE WICKED SENTENCES

"At the end of the Bill where his name should stand he 'writ these Words' Firmed by the Firm of me Gabriel Towerson now appointed to die Guiltless of anything that can be Laid to my Charge. God Forgive them this Sin, and Receive me into his Mercy Amen. This bill was carried to Mr. Welden English Agent at Banda who paid the Money, and received the Acknowledgement. In a Table Book which Will. Griggs had in his possession was Writ what follows. 'We whose

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Names are specified: John Beaumont Merchant at Lobo. Will. Griggs, Merchant at Larica, Abel Price, Surgeon of Amboyna and Robert Brown, Taylor, who all Lye Prisoners in a Ship called the *Rotterdam* being apprehended for a pretended Conspiracy of Assaulting the Castle of Amboyna received Sentence of Death this 9th Day of March 1622–3.

"'Through Torment we were constrained to speak that which we meant not, nor ever once imagined, which we do all take upon our salvation. They tortured us with Extream Torment of Fire and Water that Flesh and Blood could not endure it, and we again take it upon our Salvation that they have put us to Death Guiltless of Our Accusations.' This Table book was delivered to a servant belonging to the English East India Company, who faithfully carried it to Mr. Welden, the Agent at Banda. The Dutch not allowing them the use of Pen, Ink, nor Paper and least they should privately procure it themselves none were suffered to convey it to them on pain of being Proceeded against as one of the Conspirators.

"But, However Samuel Colson who had a Common Prayer Book in his Pocket, in one of the waste leaves of it writ as follows:

"'Sunday, March the 5th N.S. (New Style): On board the *Rotterdam*, then lying in Irons. Understand thet I Sam. Colson late Factor at Hitto was Apprehended for Suspition of Conspiracy, and for Anything I know must die for it. Wherefore, having no better means to Make known my Innocency have writ my Confession in this book, Hoping some Good Englishman will see it. I do Here upon my Salvation, as I hope by His Death and Passion to have Redemption for my Sins; that I am Clear of such Conspiracy; neither do I know any Englishman Guilty therof, nor any Person in the World; according to the Truth of this, so May the Lord have Mercy upon My Soul.'

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"On the back side of the Title Page of the Book of Psalms, it was thus written:

"'The Japaners were taken with some villany and Brought to Examination; being most Tyrannously Tortured, were asked if the English had any hand in the Plot which the Severe Torture made them affirm. Then was Mr. Collins, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Tomson (?) and Mr. Clark brought to Examination, and were Burnt in the Palms of their Hands and under the Soles of their feet besides other Most Miserable Torture to Drink Water; some of these were almost tortured to Death. We were forced to Confess that which we never Knew by Reason of the Torment which Flesh and Blood was not able to Endure.

"'Then were the rest of the Englishmen called One by One amongst whom I was one and being Ordered to Confess, or else Endure the Torment, and withal called Mr. Johnson who was before tormented to testify against me or else he would be tortured again. Which rather than again he would endure, he said what they desired he would speak. Then was I obliged to Confess what I Never Knew, or else go to the Torments which rather than I would suffer I did Confess that which as I shall be saved before the Almighty is Not True being forced thereto by Fear of Torment.

"'Thus did they Make us Witness against Captain Towerson and at last made Captain Towerson Confess all being for Fear of Most cruel Torment. For which we Must all die. As I mean and hope to have Pardon for my Sins I know no more than the Child Unborn of this Business.

"'Written with my own Hand this 5th of March N.S. I was born in Newcastle on Tyne where I hope this book will come, so that my friends will know my innocency.

"Firmed with my Firm,

"Samuel Colson.'"

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THE MURDER OF THE BRITISH

"This Book was delivered to one that served the Hollanders who sowed it up in his bed and afterwards as opportunity served he delivered it to Mr. Welden aforesaid. About the 26th of February, O.S. the Prisoners were all Brought into the Great Hall of the Castle except Captain Towerson and Emanuel Tomson, to be prepared for Death by the Ministers. The Japaners, all in General Cryed out to the English saying 'Oh, You Englishmen where did we ever in our Lives Eat with you, or Talk with you, or ever to our remembrance see you.' Then said the Englishman 'Have you Accused us?' Upon this the Japaners shewed them their Tortured Bodies, and said 'If a Stone were thus Burnt would it not change its nature. How much more we who are Flesh and Blood.'

"Whilst they were in the Hall Captain Towerson was carried to the Place of Execution, and Two Great Jars of Water after him. What he there suffered was Unknown to the Englishmen, but it appears that they made him Subscribe to his Confession. Some time after Colson, Collins, and Tomson were taken from the rest. The Fiscal told them it was the Governors Pleasure to save one of these Three, and it being Indifferent to him who it was, they were ordered to draw lots for it, which they did and the Lot fell on Collins. Then John Beaumont was called aside and the Fiscal told him he was beholden to Peter Johnson and the Secretary for they had begged his life.

"To them that remained in the Hall came the Dutch Minister who telling them they had but a short time to live exhorted and Admonished them to make their true Confessions. The English still protested their Innocency, and desired that they might all Receive the Sacrament and by that Confirm these last Protestations of being Guiltless. But this by no means would be

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Granted them. Herupon S. Colson spoke with a loud Voice saying, According to my Innocency in this Treason so the Lord Pardon all the Rest of my Sins and if I be guilty therof more or less let me never be Partaker of thy Heavenly Kingdom. At which all the Rest cried 'Amen.'

"This done each of them knowing whom he had accused begged Forgiveness for their False Accusations which was forced from them by Fear of Torment, and they all freely Forgave one the other. After this they spent the Rest of that Doleful Night in Prayers, Singing of Psalms, and Comforting one another. Upon the Morrow morning before the Execution Day February the 27th O.S. John Powel, being cleared as hitherto mentioned came into the room where the Condemned Prisoners were kept and found them at Prayers which being ended they all Desired him to Acquaint their Friends in England of their Innocency, taking it upon their Deaths that what they had Confessed against themselves and others was forced from them by the Severity of their Tortures.

"The same morning W. Webber was called again into the Fiscal's room and there Pressed to produce the Letter which before he had Confessed to have Received from Clark; they promised him his life if he would Deliver it which though he did not, nor indeed could not yet at last they Pardoned him and sent him to the rest that were Reprieved, and Sharrock with him. All things being prepared for the Execution, the Condemned were brought out of the Hall, along by the Chamber where those that were Pardoned stood to take their last Farewell of the Countrymen now going to Execution.

"The Condemned charged these that were Reprieved to bear Witness of them to their Friends in England of their Innocency and that they Died not Traytors but so many innocents. Taking their leaves of them they

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were Carried into the Yard where their Sentence was read to them from the Gallery, and from thence they were carried to the Place of Execution together with Nine Japaners and the Portugall. The Dutch, the Amboyners, and the Natives of the Islands all Flocked together to Behold this Triumph of the Dutch over the English. Sam. Colson had Composed a Form of Prayer in Writing at the end of which was a Protestation on his Innocency which prayer he read to his Fellow Sufferers the Nights before.

"Now, also, at the Place of Execution he Devoutly Pronounced the same and then threw it aside which was taken up and carried to the Governor to keep it. Emmanuel Tomson told the Rest he did not Doubt but God would make some sign of their Innocency and every one of the Rest took it Severally upon their Salvation that they were utterly Guiltless, and so One by One suffered the Fatal Stroke with great Cheerfulness. The Portugall prayed over his Beads very Devoutly and often Kissed the Cross protesting that he was utterly Guiltless of this Treason, and the Japaners likewise, according to their Religion shut up their Last Act with the like Protestations of their Innocency.

"The Ten Englishmen who Suffered:

Captain Gabriel Towerson, Agent of the English at Amboyna.
Samuel Colson, Factor at Hitto.
Emanuel Tomson, Assistant at Amboyna.
Timothy Johnson, Assistant there also.
John Wetheral, Factor at Cambello.
John Clark, Assistant at Hitto.
William Griggs, Factor at Larica.
John Fardo, Steward of the House.
Abel Price, Surgeon, and
Robert Brown, Taylor.

"The Portugal that suffered with them, his name was Augustin Perez born at Bengala.

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"The Names of the Japaners were as follows:

Hitteso	S. Migiel	Quendayo
Siosa	P. Congie	Tasbinda
Sinsa	T. Corea	Zanchoo

"The Names of those that were not Condemned:

John Powel	John Sadler
Ephraim Ramsay	Thomas Ladbrook

"The Names of those that were Reprieved after Condemnation:

John Beaumont	Edward Collins
George Sharrock	William Webber

"At the Instant of the Execution there arose a Great Darkness with a Sudden and Violent Tempest whereby two of the Dutch ships riding in the Harbour were driven from their Anchors and with great difficulty saved from the Rocks; and, within a few days after William Ducken that had told the Governor that Robert Brown, the English Taylor had a few Months before told him that he hoped within Six Months the English would have as much to do in the Castle of Amboyna as the Dutch; this Fellow going one Evening to the Grave wherin the English were Buried, save Captain Towerson, all in one pit, fell down upon the Grave and having laid there a while was after wards taken up Stark Mad, and so having Continued for three days then died.

"Soon afterwards there Happened a Great Sickness at Amboyna which swept away over a Thousand Dutch and Amboyners in so small a space wherin there usually died not above Thirty at other Seasons. These Signs were by the few surviving English referred to the Confident Prediction of Emanuel Tomson and by the

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Amboyners Interpreted as a Token of the Wrath of God for the Barbarous Proceedings of the Dutch against the English."

THE DUTCH "PROCÈS-VERBAL"

Probably, in order to justify judicial murders procured by utterly unreliable evidence extracted from innocent men by most cruel and cold-blooded tortures, the Dutch drew up a proper *procès-verbal* detailing the proceedings and the evidence against each of those executed, at great length, and had it witnessed by Herman Van Speult, Governor of Amboyna and fourteen other Dutchmen who had taken part in, or been witness of the trial. A translation into English was also made and given to Mr. Welden (Weltden), agent at Banda, who was summoned to Amboyna by the Dutch Governor to be informed of the fate of his countrymen and to take over the goods which had been sequestrated when Towerson and the remainder were arrested.

To the English translation is appended the following certificate:

"We, whose names are here underwritten being servants to the Honourable Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies, having been required by the Worshipful Herman Van Speult Governor of Amboyna to examine the Process of Captain Towerson and his accomplices, do certify

"We have heard and read the said Process in two languages and according to our Judgement as we can Apprehend it the substance Agrees in One and the Same point.

Richard Welden	J. Van Nieupoort	John Cartwright
Rowland Hollers	Henry Gill	George Williams."

Of those who survived, Collins died in 1636, being

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then Superintendent of the Royal Powder Factory in Windsor Park. The dates of the death of Webber and Sharrock are not traceable, but both died before 1652, in which year there was an application from the widows for "some considerable recompense and satisfaction from the Dutch Ambassadors now in England for the great losses and sufferings they had so long endured."

In the year 1651 "George Forbesse (Forbes) the onely surviving witness of the sadd and fatall tragedy committed by the Dutch against the English at Amboyna, was admitted to the Company's almshouse at Limehouse, where he was to be allowed two rooms and five shillings per week (double the usual allowance) and to read prayers morning and evening." Forbes was the man to whom Colson's Psalm Book and Book of Common Prayer had been entrusted. Both he and Thomas Johnson, another Englishman in the service of the Dutch at the time, quitted it soon after the tragedy and returned to England to give evidence before the Court of Directors. Johnson was taken into the Company's service, and the last we hear of him is as factor at Armagon in 1629.

Here, then, is the lamentable narrative of one of the most dastardly crimes ever committed on a rival trading corporation, one which even now chills the blood by the details of its base inception, callous brewing, and diabolical cruelty of execution. The baselessness of the accusations, the utter futility of such a plot as that alleged against these unfortunate Englishmen are exposed by the fact that at the time there were no less than seven Dutch ships in the harbour, some thirty Dutch merchants and other civilians in Amboyna, and, within the castle, a garrison of sixty Dutch-born soldiers and about one hundred Japanese and Bandanese auxiliaries, to oppose whom there were only nineteen Englishmen in all, none of whom were soldiers.

Is there amongst all the annals of the English in

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trade or exploration anything so utterly detestable as this series of murders perpetrated under the cloak of judicial proceedings, but whose sole object was to get rid of trade rivals and strike such terror into all Englishmen that none would dare intrude on spheres claimed by the Dutch? Are there any scenes so heartrending as those attending the last moments of these eight Englishmen and two Scots, who, atrociously torn in body and anguished in mind, spent their last hours in prayer to their God and regrets for falsely incriminating one another, and, having done so, "suffered the Fatal Stroke with Great Cheerfulness." We know of none.

What were the real intentions of the Dutch is here quoted: "Having thus murthered the English, the insolence and ingratitude of the Dutch did not end there, for they seized all the goods and factories of the English at Amboyna to the value of £40,000 and sent all their Japaners to be slaves into their Islands."

ALLEGED NEGLECT BY THE KING

But what of the Stuart kings, whose only thought seems to have been to make some money out of the murders and misfortunes of their own subjects. Of King James the "True Relation" records that:

"When King James was made acquainted with the barbarous Act he forthwith sent for the Dutch Ambassador, and told him he had never heard nor read of a more impious and cruel action. 'But I do forgive you,' said the King, 'and I hope God will do the same but my sons sons will revenge this blood and punish this horrible massacre.'"

Need we comment?

The real reason for leaving vengeance or even reparation to his "sons sons" may be found in the fact that when the news of the tragedy leaked out from three Dutch ships which had put in to Falmouth through

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stress of weather, these ships were detained by the Admiralty at the request of the Company. Yet, three weeks later, they were released by the direct order of the King. More unaccountable is the attitude of the president at Surat in the matter of the command of the united Dutch and English fleet for Persia in August 1623, which had been given to Van Speult, brought from Batavia for that purpose. Quite naturally the English factors and captains on the ships refused to sail with Van Speult in command, but were overridden and compelled to accept him.

In 1627 Charles I, on the representation of the Company, arrested three Dutch ships in the Channel and had them taken into Portsmouth as hostages for the Company's claims. There was no mincing about the Company's statement concerning the release of these vessels, "for if these ships had not been released by very considerable bribes through the corruption of the Court the English might have obtained some satisfaction for their losses and injuries." But this statement was made in the Petition to the Lord Protector.

For many years longer the outrages on the English and their trade in the Far Eastern seas continued. In 1628 they burnt the English factory at Socotra, causing the Company a loss of £50,000. The culminating point was reached in 1649 when the Dutch seized the *Endymion* and plundered her of pepper worth £6000, which they alleged had been obtained from plantations under Dutch protection. The entry concerning this matter is quaint enough (No. 14). In the year 1649 the Dutch Company, with two great ships of 1200 tons apiece and four sloops, violently boarded the *Endymion*, forcibly breaking open her hold and hatches and taking the cargo of pepper. The Dutch general being asked by the captain the reason of these extraordinary proceedings, "hee fell into high termes and

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swore all Englishmen were rogues and traytors, and that hee would not esteeme them as he had before they having noe kinge, and withall threatened toe doe the English alle the harme hee colde, and for their President and Councill, hee wolde kick them upp and downe if they were in his presence."

Year after year the claims were pressed, but either scouted or evaded by the Dutch, which may have been just as well during the reign of King Charles, for, to judge by an entry in the court minutes, if they had paid anything, it would never have reached the injured parties. In the end the matter was taken up by the Lord Protector, with the result that in 1654 the Dutch paid £85,000 to the Company exclusive of £3615 to the heirs of those they had so brutally murdered under semblance of trial.

In addition, certain restorations of territory were promised, but, with the exception of the Island of Pulo Rann, these were never made over. Even the island restored was quite useless, for every spice tree upon it was grubbed up or burnt down; so, being useless to the English, it eventually reverted to the Dutch. Here we may close the most painful chapter in the history of the East India Company with the names of those who suffered:

Names	*Age*	*Birthplace*	*Country*	*Capacity*
John Beaumont	48	Berkshire	England	Merchant
Robert Brown	24	Edinburgh	Scotland	Tailor
John Clark	36	Ordington	England	Assistant
Edward Collins	25	London	England	Merchant
Samuel Colson	39	Newcastle	England	Merchant
John Fardo	42	London	England	Merchant
William Griggs	28	Dunstable	England	Merchant
Timothy Johnson	29	Newcastle	England	Merchant
Thomas Ladbrook	31	London	England	Merchant
John Powel	31	Bristol	England	Assistant
Abel Price	24	Beles	Wales	Surgeon
Ephraim Ramsay	21	Carelstow	Scotland	Assistant

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Names.	*Age*	*Birthplace*	*Country*	*Capacity*
John Sadler	26	London	England	Assistant
George Sharrock	31	Winchester	England	Assistant
Emanuel Tomson	50	Hamburgh	Holland	Principal
Gabriel Towerson	49	London	England	Principal
William Webber	32	Glaston	England	Assistant
John Wetheral	31	Tiverton	England	Merchant
Augustin Perez	36	Bengal	India	Slave captain

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CHAPTER V

THE MISSION OF WILLIAM HAWKINS TO THE GREAT MOGUL (1608)

WILLIAM HAWKINS AND THE *HECTOR*—THE EMPEROR JEHANGHIR—HAWKINS COMES TO SURAT—PORTUGUESE TREACHERY—THE MISSION AT AGRA—HAWKINS AND THE GREAT MOGUL—HAWKINS' RETURN TO ENGLAND

WILLIAM HAWKINS AND THE *HECTOR*

THE beginning of the seventeenth century was now to see that mission to the court of the Great Mogul, from which was to come the epic of British India. And this was the manner of it. One day at the end of August 1608, her weathered sails bellied to the monsoon gale and her wide bow rising high to the swelling seas, came the tall ship *Hector* of London, first of all English ships to sight the western coast of India, there to heave-to off "the Barre of Suratte" at the mouth of the Tapti River.

Full spread from her foretop blew out the Red Cross of England, this day shown for the first time to the land it was destined to dominate, and from the maintop the flag of the Union of North and South Britain, combining the Red Cross of England, "commonlie called the Crosse of St. George, and the White Crosse of Scotland commonlie called the St. Andrews Crosse joyned together in a form mayde by oure Heraldes and now enjoyned to be worne by oure Subjectes of North and South Brittayne, at the maintoppes of their shippes, as given under our hande at our Court of Westminster the Twelfth Day of April 1606."

Foremost of the small group gathered on the towering

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poop, eyeing with keen interest the low, palm-fringed shore and the tree-topped hills in the distance, stood William Hawkins, Cape merchant, captain of the good ship *Hector* in the service of the Worshipful Company of Merchant Adventurers of London and merchant envoy to the court of the Mogul. Now a man of forty-four, Hawkins, nephew of the famous Sir John, had commenced a seafaring career so early as 1582, when he sailed with Fenton for the discovery of the North-west Passage, one of those Elizabethan adventures which were a mere excuse for licensed piracy, as was evident from Fenton's commission, which gave him permission to take all ships that should oppose him south of the equinoctial line.

Like several similar ventures of the Elizabethan period this was a dismal failure, ending in shipwreck, disaster, and recrimination, though no blame seems to have been attached to Hawkins other than that youth which caused him to be rated as a "malapert boy." After this, Hawkins made several voyages to the Spanish Main, through the Straits of Magellan, and to the West Indies before taking service with the Levant Company of London as merchant and shipmaster, and residing for some years in the ports of Asia Minor. It was there that he gained that knowledge of Turki, the Mogul family language, and of Eastern manners and mentality, that caused him to be selected for his present mission, and later served him so well with Jehanghir.

Though now merchant and trader by profession, Hawkins was no mere man of yardstick, scale, and ledger, but even for those stark days a man whose own hands could guard his head, always ready for defence or even aggression whenever his own or his country's interests were concerned. Withal, he was no drunken brawler or reckless ruffler, but quick to see an opportunity, honourable in a compact, keen witted and of

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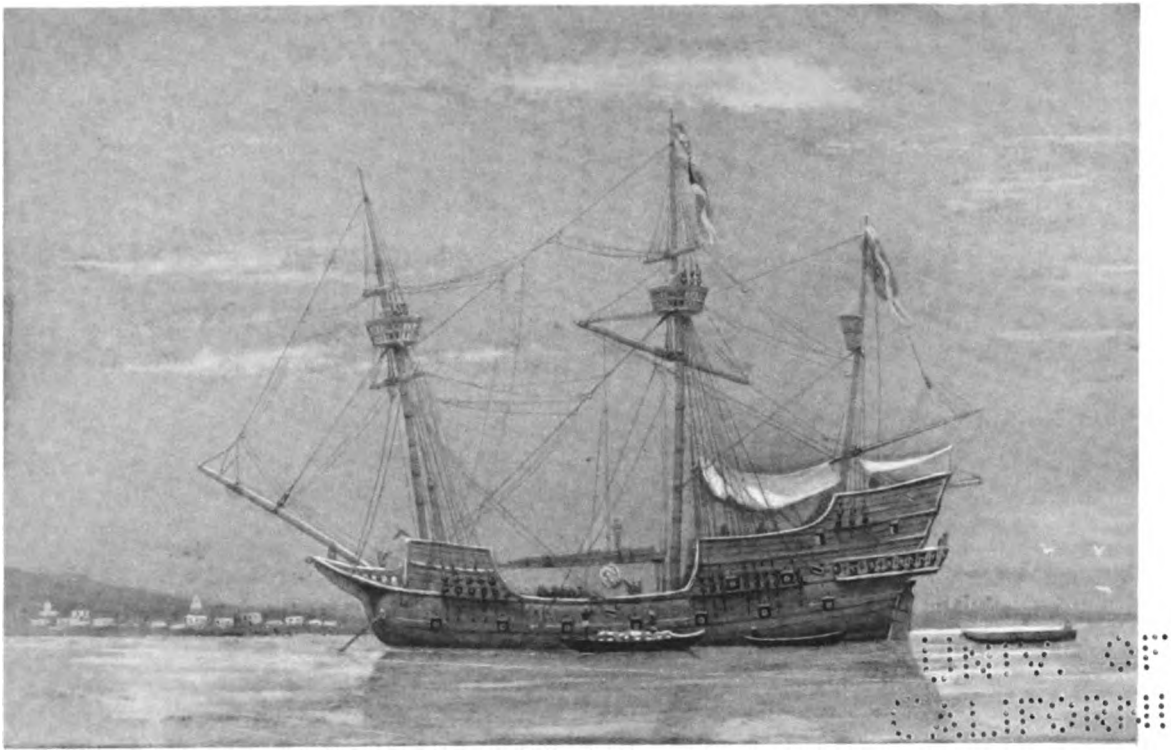

GALLEON OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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infinite jest, and as good at the bottle as the best of his compeers. It was these latter qualities as well as his knowledge of Turki that ingratiated him with Jehanghir, who loved such a man of infinite experience and anecdote, who could spice his discourse with that Attic salt so welcome to that cheery Emperor.

THE EMPEROR JEHANGHIR

Of Jehanghir, Manucci wrote:

"He drank wine in the face of his whole Court and also ate prohibited meats. When the Kazi and the Imams admonished him, he enquired in what religion the use of wine and of meat of every description was permitted without any distinction. The reply was: in the Christian religion alone. 'Then,' said Jehanghir, 'we must all become Christians. Let tailors be brought to convert our robes into coats and our turbans into hats.' At these words the doctors trembled for their sect. Fear and interest made them take a less bold tone. They all declared that the monarch was not bound by the precepts of the Alcoran, and that he might without scruple eat forbidden meats and drinks, if they were agreeable to him.

"He ordered that the entrance to his palace should be free to all the Feringhis of whatsoever nation. He drank with them until daylight, particularly at the times when the Mahomedans fasted with the greatest exactness. When any scrupulous person of his own nation happened to be present at these assemblies, he ordered him to break his fast, or he would throw him to the lions, a brace of whom were always kept chained beneath the window of his apartment."

The primary object when founding the London Company was trade with Asiatic countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope. But owing to the strength of the united Spaniards and Portuguese and their firm estab-

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lishment in India, the first and second fleets had been compelled to avoid the Indian coasts and confine their operations to the farther East. But when the Treaty of London of 1604 closed the long wars with the Spanish, it was considered fairly safe to make an attempt on the monopoly hitherto held by their allies, the Portuguese, in India.

Accordingly, after long consideration, a fleet, consisting of the *Dragon*, the *Hector*, and a small vessel named the *Content* acting as a store-ship, was fitted out and sailed from London Pool early in March 1607 under command of Captain Keeling in the *Dragon* with William Hawkins as Cape merchant and captain of the *Hector*. Very early in the voyage the *Content* dropped out, through stress of weather, and returned to London. The others continued the voyage, and, after long delay, during which they underwent many of the vicissitudes common to voyages of that period, arrived off Socotra in April 1608.

An attempt to reach Aden for trade was foiled by contrary winds, so it was decided that the *Dragon* with Keeling should go on to Bantam, whilst the *Hector* with Hawkins should make for Surat. Should a full cargo be there procurable, the *Hector* would return, but if not she was to go on to Bantam after landing Hawkins, who should proceed to the Mogul Court at Agra and personally present the letter from King James to Jehanghir soliciting the grant of "such libertie of traffic, and priveleges as shall be reasonable for the security and profitt of trade." If successful he was to remain in India and found a factory, but if not, to either make his way home overland or come down to the coast and take his chance of a ship.

HAWKINS COMES TO SURAT

Such is the history of William Hawkins, and of the project in which he became the principal after leaving

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Socotra, where he stayed to re-fit until 4th August 1608. By this time the monsoon was sufficiently abated for a safe voyage to a coast unknown to English mariners, and, after twenty days' sailing, the slow progress being due to a foul ship. At this time the safe anchorage of Swally Hole (cove) where the ships of the Company afterwards lay was not discovered, so that vessels were compelled to lie in the roads outside the "Barre."

Immediately after arrival Captain Hawkins deputed Francis Buck, merchant, and two others to acquaint the Governor of Surat with the arrival of "an embassadour from the King of England with his letter and presents," and the next day landed himself, "accompanied by all my merchants and others in the best manner I could, befitting the honour of my Kinge and my country." Unfortunately, the Governor being too "drunke with opium," Hawkins had to content himself with the "Chief Customer" (excise officer, who informed him that he could do nothing without the consent and orders of Mukarrab Khan, Viceroy of Cambay and Surat, then some twenty days' journey up-country.

Meanwhile, Hawkins, having decided to send the *Hector* on to Bantam, busied himself in buying locally such goods as might sell at Bantam, and, in so doing, incurred the secret enmity of the local merchants by his high prices. After twenty days the brother of the Viceroy arrived at Surat and gave permission to unload such goods as Hawkins thought to sell locally, and embark the merchandise he had bought to sell at Bantam. The command of the *Hector* was now formally made over to Master Marlow, and the goods for Bantam embarked at Surat and sent down the river under charge of Francis Buck. Unfortunately, no danger being apprehended, the crew of thirty men were unprovided with arms and ammunition, with the result that:

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"The next day, going about my affaires to the great mans brother I was met by ten or twelve of our men, the better sort of them much frighted, telling me the heaviest news, as I thought that had ever come unto me, of the taking of the barks by some Portugall frigates, and all goods and men taken they only being escaped. I demanding in what manner they were taken and whether they did not fight they saying that Master Marlow would not suffer them saying that the Portugalls were our friends, and Bucke, on the other side, went to the Portugalls without a pawne (hostage) and there betrayed us, for he never came again. Indeed Bucke went on the oath and faithfull promise of the Portugall Captain, but was never suffered to return.

"I presently sent a letter to the Captain Major that he release my men and goods for that we were Englishmen, and our King's had peace and amity and that we were sent into the Moguls country by our King and with his letter for his subjects to trade in this country and with His Majesty's commission for the government of his subjects, and I made no question that in delivering back his Majesty's subjects and goods it would be well taken. But if on the other hand, it would be a breach of faith and means of war. At the receit of my letter the proud rascal braved so muche, as the messenger told me, most vilely abusing His Majesty and terming him King of Fishermen and of an island of no import and a F—t for his commission, scorning to send me any answer.

"It was my chance next day to meet with a captain of one of the Portugal frigates who came to demand that the Governor should send me prisoner to him for that we were Hollanders. I took occasion to speak with him of the abuses offered the King of England, and his subjects. His answer was that these seas belonged to the King of Portugal without whose licence none should come. I told him the King of

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England's licence was as good as the King of Spaine's and he that saith the contrary is a traytor and a vilayne. and so tel your great captaine he is a base vilaine and a traytor to his owne King, and that I will maintayne with my sword, dare he come ashore. I sending him a challenge, the Moores perseving I was much mooved, caused the Portugall to depart.

"The 5th of October the ship set sail leaving me with one merchant William Finch who was sicke the most of the time and one boy that were all the company I had to defend myself from the many enemies who daily lay lurking for my destruction. But God preserved me, and in spight of all I took resolution to go forward on my travels. After the departure of the ship I found that my goods and men were betrayed unto the Portugall by the dogge Micreb-Khan and his followers according to a plot laid by him and the Jesuit Father Pinheiro."

PORTUGUESE TREACHERY

"After this I was so misused that it was unsufferable, although remayning in an heathen country invironed with so many enemies who daily did nothing else but plot to murther me and cozen me of my goodes. First by Micreb-chan to take what he pleased, giving me as his own barbarous conscience afforded. . . . Almost all this time William Finch was sicke of the fluxe but thankes to god recovered past hope. . . . I could not peepe out of doores for feare of Portugall who in troops lurked in bye ways to give me assault to murder me.

". . . I was invited to a great feast at the waterside on the occasion of the departure of the ship for Mocha. Neere unto this the Portugalls had two frigatts of their Armada out of which came three gallant fellows and some 40 Portugalls scattering themselves along the

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sea side to give assault when the word should be given. These three gallants that came to the tent armed with coats of buffe down to their knees, their rapiers and pistols by their sides came demanding for the English Captain. I arising told them I was the man and perseving an alteration in them laid hand on my sword.

"The Captain Mogull perseving treason to me drew their weapons also, and if the Portugalls had not been the swifter, both they and their crew would have come short off. Another time they came to assault me in mine house with a friar some forty of them. Many troops at times lay lurking for me and mine in the street in that kind I was compelled to go to the Governor to complain of the Portugalls coming armed to murther me. And now Padre Pineiro the jesuit profferred Mocreb-chan fortie thousand reals of eight to send me prisoner to Daman . . . and plotted with Micreb-chan to overthrow my journey, which he could not do because I came from a king.

"Now, finding William Finch in good health newly recovered, I left all things in his power, and, being denied of Micreb-chan took up souldiers besides shot and bowmen that I hired. One captain of the Chanchanna gave me fortie or fiftie valiant horsemen, a people much feared in that countrie without whom I had been overthrowne."

Having settled his affairs and gathered his defenders, Hawkins left Surat on the 1st February 1609. From the very commencement, owing to the machinations of his enemies, trouble dogged his steps the, first item being an encounter with two hundred horsemen hired by the Jesuit priest to waylay and kill the envoy. Fortunately, the very sight of the Pathan horse was sufficient to enable him to pass unmolested. The next trouble arose with the coachman and the interpreter, both of whom had been suborned by the Portuguese, the one to poison his food, and the other, if this did

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not succeed, to have him disposed of by some other means.

"But the coachman being drunk with certain of his kindred discovered the treason, he being overheard by some of my soldiers I called him before me, but he never would confess though he was very much beaten only cursing his fortune that he could not effect it. So I sent him prisoner to the Governor of Surat." As for the interpreter, he confessed his share in the plot, but averring that he had never seriously considered it, was forgiven and kept on.

"So following on my travels to Bremport[1] some two days bey the Pathans left me to be conducted by another Pathan captain who having been held prisoner by the Portugalls was ready at any time to do them a disservice. With fortie horse he went with me until freed from the dangerous places at which time he met with a troup of outlaws and took some four alive and slew and hurt eight. The rest escaped."

THE MISSION AT AGRA

"The 18th of the said month thanks be to God I came in safe to Bramport[1] and the next day when the visit the Chanchanna being the Lord General and Viceroy taking with me presents. After three hours of conference he made me a great feast and being risen from the table invested me with two clokes the one of fine woolen (pushmina) and the other of cloth of gold, which done he embraced me giving me his most kind letter of favour to the King which avayled me much. The language we spoke was Turkish.

"I remained in Bramport onto the 2nd of March for until then I could not end my business of monies of exchange staying like wise for a caravan. Having hired new souldiers I followed my journey to Agra where

[1] Berhampore(?)

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after much labour, toyle, and many dangers I arrived in safety the 16th of April 1609. Being in the city and seeking for a house in a very secret manner notice was given to the King that I had come, but was not to be found. He presently charged both horsemen and footmen in many troupes not to leave untill I was found commanding his knight Marshall to conduct me to the Court as an Embassadour of a King ought to be. Which he did with a great train making such haste that I admired much, for I could scarce obtayne time to apparel myself and my men in our best attire."

Let us picture for you this "great trayne."

Forth from a narrowing street in old Agra city to the plain before the fort, issues first, a tumultuous band of mounted musicians sounding barbaric fanfares and flourishes from weird trumpets and throbbing kettledrums, which re-echo from the towering houses, whose roofs and balconies are thronged with citizens eager for a glimpse of the new sample of Feringhi.

Led by the "knight Marshall" comes a gorgeous troop of cavaliers, Mogul, Afghan and Rajput intermingled, their Arab and Turkoman chargers caracolling and passaging as if proudly conscious of their own gorgeous trappings and their knightly riders. Each horse is caparisoned in flowing saddle-cloths of velvet or broadcloth or brocade of the brightest hues, surmounted by padded and peaked saddles from which depend stirrup leathers of dyed morocco ending in shovel stirrups with spur points. Bridles, reins, leathers, cruppers and martingales are all encrusted with white cowrie shells studded by gleaming mock jewels of coloured glass, or of the semi-precious stones. Around the necks of the horses are hung strings of blue beads to guard from the evil eye, and from the martingales depend gaily coloured plumes of yak or horse-tails, whilst from the bridle-crest springs a tuft of variegated feathers set in polished brass or silver sockets. Even

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the manes and tails of the lighter-hued horses have not escaped the dyer, yellow and pink predominating.

As gorgeously arrayed are the riders in silks and satins of multitudinous hues rivalling the brilliancy of the sun. All are armoured in ring or chain mail shirts, steel back and breastplates damascened with gold in patterned arabesques, steel arm-pieces ending in a mailed glove, and a steel head-piece, from whose crest rises a tuft of heron plumes. Around the steel caps are wound silken turbans of intermingled colours threaded and fringed with gold, or silver thread and lace.

Slung over the left shoulder each Mogul cavalier bears a lacquered buffalo-horn bow, whose arrows are carried in a lacquered quiver at the right saddle-bow, and, covering his back, a raw hide shield rimmed and bossed with brass and held in place by straps crossing the chest. At his side swings a gilded, hilted, curved tulwar, with a precious stone set in the pommel and sheathed in a red or blue velvet scabbard with gilt and jewelled fittings, real or imitation, whilst a pair of clumsy pistols thrust in shell-crusted holsters complete the armament. Imagine this riot of colour lit by a tropical sun and thrown into kaleidoscopic movement by the caracolling horses, and the ruffling wind, and you have a picture of old-world Asiatic splendour unknown since its last lingerings died out with the days of Ranjit Singh.

Singly, behind this gorgeous troop, paces "my manne," Nicholas Ufflett, on a black barb lent by the Marshall himself, and dressed in black, matching his black greaves, corselet and high double-peaked Elizabethan morion, and his bowl-hilted sword sheathed in black leather with plain steel mountings. In his right hand he bears his halberd to which is ringed the Cross of St. George, jealously regarded by the grim Jesuits watching from the fort walls. A horse-length behind

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him follows "my boye, Stephen Gravenor," arrayed in orange tawny, and mounted on an Arab barb. On his saddle-bow rests a velvet cushion whereon lies encased in a silken envelope the letter from King James to the Emperor Jehanghir.

Then, between escorting cavaliers, flanked by double lines of bow and matchlock men, rides Captain Hawkins in his "best apparel," striking, indeed, a note of rich colour but little inferior to those who precede him. On his head is a broad-brimmed scarlet beaver hat, encircled by an entwined cord of red and white silk with free ends hanging over the right brim, and a white ostrich plume fringing the left, and adorned in front by a ruby humming-bird with emerald eyes, a souvenir of his Western voyages. His short jerkin of purple, superfine, West of England broadcloth, with high-shouldered sleeves is slashed and purfled with yellow satin and bound by silver lace marking edges and seams, as are his royal blue bombasted breeches, between which the falling tops of high red Spanish leather boots reveal glimpses of yellow cloth hose. The white-lined, falling tops of the boots are garnished with broad silver lace and the boots themselves completed by silver, broad-rowelled spurs. For arms he bears a long Spanish-hilted sword in a plain scabbard dependent from a serviceable waistbelt ornamented only by a broad silver buckle.

Behind clatters another Mogul troop of less gorgeous horse, and the procession closes with a rag-tag of matchlock-men, bowmen, and spearmen, somewhat clamorous and disorderly. At the gates of the fort the cavaliers dismount, and, leaving their horses to the syces, who invariably attend on peace occasions, pass through to form a lane through which Hawkins, preceded by Nicholas Ufflet and Stephen Gravenor, pass to the Khas Mahal, where awaits him the Emperor Jehanghir, surrounded by an eye-dazzling retinue, amongst which are seen the olive faces of a few

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"Portugalls" and the sombre garb of the inevitable Jesuit.

HAWKINS AND THE GREAT MOGUL

Arrived at the foot of the throne, Hawkins takes the silken envelope from the cushion, and, advancing alone, sweeps the ground with his plumed hat in an elaborate salute with his right hand, whilst pressing the missive to his breast with his left. Then, changing hands, he presents the letter with his right to the Mogul, who "graciouslie bent down to receive and after vieweing it a prettie while" directed the sour-faced Padre Xavier to translate it from the original Latin to Persian, the language of the court, which, with many adverse comments on phrasing and contents, is duly completed. Now comes an advantage counted upon when Hawkins was selected, for, with another courtly bow, he informs the delighted monarch that there is no need for an interpreter, for he can speak his ancestral language, and thus does he secure a private interview.

For a time Hawkins enjoyed high favour, being made a titular commander of four hundred horse, a dignity supposed to carry with it emoluments of thirty thousand rupees per annum. To judge by the complaints made by Hawkins, he never received even a third of the amount, though whether it was withheld by order of Jehanghir himself or peculated by the Treasurer does not appear. Probably both were concerned, the one to cut down the allowance, and the other to withhold a portion of what was left. His name being beyond the capacity of the Emperor to pronounce, he was called the "Inglis Caun," a title which conferred the right to stand within the inner circle of the "redd rayles where none but the highest in the land were permitted to enter."

"Nowe were all the Purtugalls mayde lyke madded

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dogges labouringe to mayke my passage out of thos world by anie menes for both by night and by day the Kinge delighted to talke withe mee of the affaires of England and other countries, and espetiallie of the West Indies where I hadde beene." The fact was that Jehanghir was a jovial drunkard who usually turned night into day, and to whom a man like Hawkins, of vast experiences and fund of spicy anecdote was a boon companion at all times most welcome until, as with everything, the novelty palled.

But when Hawkins attempted to turn this personal popularity to account in obtaining some commercial concessions, his solicitations were either evaded or answered by vague promises, for though apparently a careless voluptuary, Jehanghir had a keen eye to the main chance, and was not inclined to break with the Portuguese, the settled income from whose customs was very great, and their power of bribery unlimited. All that he did obtain was more vague promises of personal advancement at the court, Jehanghir even going so far as to promise him command of ten thousand horse, a dignity reserved for princes of the blood royal. Neither post nor pay ever materialised.

The truth was that the Portuguese interests were too powerful. They were long established, much in favour with the nobles of the court whom they liberally conciliated, and especially with Mukarrab Khan, the Viceroy of Surat and Cambay, whose personal enmity Hawkins had incurred by reporting him to Jehanghir for appropriating the best goods at his own prices, and, in addition, some of the presents intended for the King. For a time Mukarrab Khan lost favour, but, having regained it by the usual means, became only the more embittered against Hawkins. Regarding the Portuguese, Hawkins records:

"The Jesuites and the Portugalls slept nott but bye all menes sought my overthrow even regarding their

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masses and church matters (neglecting them) butt little for thatt concern, and the principall Mahomedans neere the King envyed muche that a Christian shoul bee soe neere him. The Portingalls tolde the Kynge that sufferinge the English in his lande wolde bee the losse of his country neere the seaside. But the Mogull answered thatt hee had butt one Englishman in all his and himm they neede feare nott for I wolde have given him his living neere the seacoste but hee refused itt tayking itt nerre mee. Also the greter Mahomedans the more became myne enemies for itt went against their hertes that a Christian sholde bee so grete and stand soe neere the Kynge the more thatt hee had promised to mayke his brothers Christians the which soone after mye coming hee performed."

The men here mentioned were not brothers of Jehanghir but nephews, who had consented to become Christians on promise of receiving Portuguese wives guaranteed by the Jesuits. The ceremony of reception into the Christian religion was duly performed, for Jourdain mentions it, and that, when going to the church, "Captain Hawkins was in the ledde of them with sixty European Horse before whom went the collors of St. George whiche were lett fly in the courte before the Kynge himself." However, the promised wives not being forthcoming, the converts relapsed. To continue:

"I tolde the Kynge the dangers I had passed and the present dangers I was inn withe my boy Stephen Gravenor instantly departing this world (of fever) mye manne Nicholas Ufflett extreame sicke, and myself lyke to fall down, Wherupon the Kynge called the Jesuites to himm and told them iff I dyed for some extraordinary cause they wolde alle rue for itt. This tyme past, the Kynge was very ernest thatt I shoulde tayke a white mayden oute of his palace, who woulde give her all that was necessary with slaves and hee

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woulde promise mee she woulde become a Christian and bye this menes mye meate and drinke shoulde bee looked after, and I shoulde live without feare.

"In regard (if she was) she was a Moore I refused butt if a Christian shoulde bee found I woulde accept itt (her). After wiche saying I little thought that A Christianes daughter colde bee founde. Soe the Kynge called to mynde Mubarique Sha, his daughter, whiche was a Christian Armenian of the moste ancient Christian who had dyed suddenly leaving the childe butt a few jewels. I seeinge her of so honest a parentage and having passed mye worde to the Kynge, colde nott withstand mye fortune, and for want of a Christian Minister (the Jesuits having refused) I marryed her before Christian witnesses. The priest was mye man Nicholas Ufflett wiche I thought had been lawful until a minister that came with Sir Henry Middleton shewed mee mye error and wee were married againe."

Time passed on without any substantial change, promises made one day being revoked the next or altogether ignored. The obstacle was still the Portuguese, whom the Indian trade had made a powerful nation, a consideration they could not afford, in their own opinion, to share or run the danger of losing. Their arguments were as follows (one of them sounds prophetic whilst the other, regarding the conduct of the mariners, was quite correct):

"The Portugalls sayde thatt the danger of admitting the English to trayde was that they were a nation that once wee sett foote in his country woulde tayke itt from him and besydes they were a drunken and disorderlie race whom itt was a danger to admitt within anie realme."

The latter assertion was proved by the conduct of the crew of the *Ascension*, a ship that had left for India twelve months later than Hawkins with more goods

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and additional presents for the Emperor. Unfortunately, by bad seamanship in unknown waters, the vessel went aground at Gandevi and became a total wreck, only seventy of her crew of one hundred and twenty being saved. The survivors made their way to Surat overland, causing much "disorder and riot," both on the journey and at Surat. From Surat they came to Agra with the intention of going home overland, which few, however, fulfilled, for most took service as gunners with Jehanghir, some died, and only about half a dozen finally reached England.

To these accusations Hawkins could only reply that: "I wolde gainsay itt withe mye life thatt we were nott soe base a nation as these myne enemies reported." In any case, these continual bickerings and intrigues must have been distasteful to Jehanghir, for they were practically continuous for about two years, during which time Hawkins himself must have palled upon him, and outstayed his welcome. The result was that, for a time, Hawkins was forbidden the court. Jourdain alleges that the real reason was that, in one of the fits of alcoholic remorse that occasionally overtook him, during which the very smell of liquor was most obnoxious, Jehanghir got a whiff of the morning draught from Hawkins, who always indulged very freely, "wherat the Kynge pawsed a little, and then consideringe thatt hee was a stranger, hee bid Captain Hawkins to goe to his howse and when next hee came hee shoulde nott drinke. Soe being disgraced in publique he could not bee suffered to come into his accustomed place neere the Kynge."

About this time the arrival of some English ships at Surat aroused hopes of more presents, in anticipation of which Hawkins regained a measure of favour and again attended court. But disappointment in this matter and the action of the Portuguese in "presenting a faire ballace rubie weighing three hundred and fiftie

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troties and manie other things caused the favour of the English to be disannulled. The speches of the Fathers, and the Portugalls nowe and formerly, and lucre of this stone, and the promyse bye the Fathers of manie rare toyes were the cawses thatt the Kynge overthrew mye affaires againe saying 'Lett the English come no moore.'"

However, the presentation of a valuable ring by Hawkins again changed the complexion of affairs, for "the Kynge graunted all mye requestes commandinge his viziers to mayke another commaundement and thatt noe man shoulde open his mouthe for itt was his pleasure that the Englishe shoulde come into his courtes and portes. So this tyme I was again afloat. Butt the instant the Jesuit hadd notiss he cawsed the Kynge to withdraw his commaundement hee esteeminge a few toyes the fathers promised him more than his honour. Thus was I tossed and tumbled in the manner of a riche merchant adventuring all in one bottome and by casualties of stormes and pirates losing alle.

"We nowe mayde reddy to depart for the Kynge answered finally that for mye nation he wolde graunt nothing, but for myself if I wolde remayne in his service he woulde commaunde all thatt had been allowed again for mye content. The wiche I denied unless the English coulde come into his portes according to his promise. So in the ende I tooke mye departure from Agra the 2nd of November 1612 for I was in muche doubte thatt the Portingalls would poyson me for lucre of mye goodes."

HAWKINS' RETURN TO ENGLAND

It says much for the patriotism of Hawkins that he refused offers of personal advancement unless accompanied by a benefit to his own country. But, on the other hand, it may have been that he was doubtful of

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their sincerity seeing that he had received less than £300 in all for the rank conferred upon him when he first came to the court. His original intention had been to go home overland, "beeing past all hopes for ever embarking ourselves at Surat whiche course I wolde willingly have undertaken for I coulde not travell through Turkie espetiallie withe a woman.

"So in the end I was forced to currie favour with the Jesuits, to get mee a safe conduct from their Viceroy to go to Goa, and so to Portugall and from thence to England thinking that the Viceroy havinge given me his Seguro Royall there woulde bee no danger for me. But when mye wife's mother and kindred saw that I was to carry her away suspecting that they woulde never see her more, they did so distaste me in these travells that I was forced to yeeld unto them that mye wife should go no further than Goa, because thatt was India thatt they could goe and visit her and that, if at any time I meant to goe to Portugall thatt I leave her that portion that is the custom of Portugall to leave their wives when they dye.

"Unto whiche I was forced to yeeld to give them content to avoyde any mischeifes? But knowing that mye wife, if she woulde goe withe me, all would be of no effecte I prevailed on the Jesuites to send for two Seguros the one concerning my being and free liberty in Goa and to bee as a Portugall (naturalised?) in all Tradings and Commerce in Goa which was to shew my wife's parents the other was an absolute grant for two passages into Portugall and so for England with mye Wife and Goodes, without any disturbance (hindrance) from my wife's friends, and what agreements I made with them to be void and of no effect but (to permit) I shoulde come and go when I plesed with free liberty of conscience for myself. This last Seguro I was to receive at Cambaya. This and much more the Fathers would have done for me, only to rid

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me oute of the country, for beeing cleere of me they colde the much more quietly sleep."

Meanwhile the fleet under Sir Henry Middleton had arrived at Surat, thus obviating any necessity to go to Goa, so, after a weary and perilous journey, Hawkins and his wife embarked on the 26th January 1612, he having spent over three years at the Mogul court or travelling in India. From Surat the fleet passed on to Dalohol, a Portuguese port, wherein they found a Portuguese ship and a frigate, both of which were righteously plundered in compensation for the goods taken from Hawkins at Surat in 1608.

"From thence we departed the Fifth of March 1612 for the Red Sea being minded to revenge us of the wrongs offered us by both the Turkes and the Mogulls. At the whiche place we arrived on the 3rd of April. Here wee found three English ships their Captain being John Saris." (This was the fleet for Japan mentioned in the last chapter.) "Having despatched our business in the Red Sea" (which was to plunder a number of Mogul and Portuguese vessels or make forced exchanges) 'wee set sayle from thence on the 16th August 1612 and arrived at Tiku in Sumatra the 19th October 1612."

Finding himself in very bad health, Hawkins took passage home with the homeward-bound fleet, and left Sumatra in January 1613. The passage home was very stormy, two vessels only rounding the Cape of Good Hope out of the three, whilst the *Thomas*, aboard which was Hawkins, was obliged to put into Cape Town to re-fit. When she resumed her voyage sickness broke out, carrying off a great number of the crew, rendering her so weak that she nearly fell prey to a pirate ship. Fortunately the pirates were driven off by the *Pearl*, an independent ship returning from a piratical cruise on the Sumatran coast, who not only rescued the *Thomas*, but gave her much needed water and provisions.

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Further misfortune dogging the vessel, she was compelled to put in to Cork harbour in July 1613, having buried Hawkins at sea a few days before her arrival. The widow came on to England, where she soon found friends and also a husband for she possessed about £6000 in jewels and the reversionary interest of her late husband's estate, which, however, turned out to be worth less than nothing, the Committee of Adjustment finding an adverse balance of £600. But this was no reflection on Hawkins, being really for items which should fairly have been charged to the Company's own account, being for expenses necessary to keep a proper state. Amongst them were items for presents, escorts to Court, and entertainments to courtiers, all of which were legitimately chargeable to the Company, one would assume.

Not so the Court of Directors. They debited his account with all these items, which, after crediting him with his full salary of £200 per annum and £300 for expenses, left the estate in debt to the amount stated. But, apparently, some doubt beset them, for they most graciously wrote off the debt, on account of the widow being a "straunger," and not only this, but when she married Gabriel Towerson, who had been Captain of the *Hector* in the year 1614, made her a wedding present of 200 Jacobuses (£240) with, of course, a view to this generosity having some effect in India.

In 1617 Towerson and his wife returned to India in the hope of bettering their fortunes by the influence of the wife's relatives at the Court. But these expectations were not fulfilled, so leaving his wife with the relations she refused again to quit, Towerson returned to England with Sir Thomas Roe, who had continued the errand on which Hawkins had been sent, though with higher status and better results, due mainly to the sea victories over the Portuguese by Middleton and Best.

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In 1619 Towerson re-entered the Company's service, and was employed as principal merchant in the Moluccas, where, three years later, he was judicially murdered by the Dutch in the Amboyna massacre, described in the previous chapter.

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CHAPTER VI

CAPTAIN ANDREW SHILLING AND HIS VICTORY OVER THE PORTUGUESE (1617)

TOUGH SEA DOGS—THE TRADE OF THE PERSIAN GULF—THE JEALOUSY OF THE PORTUGUESE—THE STOUT FIGHT OFF JASK—THE NARRATIVE OF RICHARD SWAN—THE "PORTUGALLS" ARE BROUGHT TO BATTLE—ABOARD THE "PORTUGALLS"—THE ENGLISH SCENE—THE FINAL FIGHT

TOUGH SEA DOGS

"If the goodes wee carrye bee not vendible, and that an honest trade upon equall tearmes be nott procurable, thenn I hope powder and shott, Sir Henry Middelltonne's commiddittie will passe."

Thus spoke Andrew Shilling, master of the *Ann Royal* in the fleet of Captain Pring, before his vessel set sail for Mocha to renew the negotiations for opening a factory which had been abandoned in consequence of the treacherous capture and subsequent ill-treatment of Sir Henry Middleton by the Turks in 1610–1611. The "tearmes" alluded to were the retaliatory measures adopted by Sir Henry in 1612 when he held up both Persian and Portuguese ships and exchanged his own commodities for such of theirs as he desired, at the cannon's mouth, the plunder of the Portuguese being due to revenge for their treatment of Hawkins, then aboard his fleet.

Shilling himself was a typical Elizabethan shipmaster of the tarpaulin class, who had entered the Royal Navy early in life as an ordinary seaman, and by the year 1603 had attained the position of a chief shipmaster in the Navy, a rank which would correspond

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to that of a senior captain, and entitled him to wear the silver whistle and chain. Probably he retired from the royal service in 1605, when many ships were laid up, and, there being no half-pay in those days, was compelled to enter the merchant service, no very great change, for, until a century later, the ships were practically identical, every sea-going vessel of any size being convertible to a man-o'-war at will.

He then entered the service of the Levant Company of London, for whom he made many voyages to the ports of the Mediterranean and Asia Minor until the year 1617, when he became captain of the *Ann Royal*, in the fleet that left England in 1617 under command of Captain Martin Pring. Here, in order to understand the reasons leading up to the sea fights off Jask which we are about to describe, it is necessary to drop back to the year 1616, when, spurred by the success of the Dutch, the English decided to reopen the struggle for the Persian trade.

THE TRADE OF THE PERSIAN GULF

In that year Edward Connock, a Cape merchant, left Surat with a small band of factors and writers, and, after some little difficulties had been overcome, managed to obtain the promise of at least an equality in trade opportunities with the Portuguese, who then monopolised the sea-borne trade of Persia and the countries bordering the Red Sea from Shah Abbas. In addition, the whole of the trade in Persian silk that was land-borne to Europe had to pass through Turkish territory, entailing heavy export duties, which, as silk was practically a royal monopoly, were burdensome to the Shah.

The appearance of the English offered a welcome opportunity to break with the Portuguese and Turkish monopolies, and so eager to close with them did the

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Shah ultimately become that he sanctioned the establishment of a factory, and even offered to supply three thousand bales of silk on credit "to give life to our trade's beginning." Unfortunately, the Court of Directors in London, who had been apprised of the the intention, were over cautious, with the result that the fleet which Connock had expected in 1617 never materialised, its representative, a small vessel named the *Bee*, which arrived in December 1617, bringing neither money nor goods, but instead a demand that the Shah should make a formal treaty and set a fixed price for the silk he desired to sell.

This disastrous end to his high hopes, and the promises he had made to the Shah, so mortified Connock that he died on Christmas Eve, 1617, a few days after the arrival of the *Bee*. His successor, Thomas Barker, laid the terms before the Shah but received a definite refusal to accept any but the current market-price for silks, though ratifying everything else and adding the promise of protection from any land attack by the Portuguese. So matters dragged on until November 1617, when the president at Surat, having bestirred himself, the expedition, with a cargo of trade goods, arrived at Jask, having also aboard the cargo of two Portuguese vessels she had acquired on Middleton's terms, omitting the trifling matter of a fair exchange.

With her combined resources the expedition managed to procure seventy bales of silks, with which she returned to Surat and transferred to the *Royal Anne*, which also had just returned but from Mocha, where she had procured a fair cargo, though without being compelled to resort to the measures advocated by Shilling in the event of a refusal to trade. In February 1619 the *Royal Anne* sailed for England, having aboard Sir Thomas Roe and Gabriel Towerson (who had failed to obtain a lucrative post with the Mogul) and the trade silks brought from Jask by the expedition, the

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sight of which decided the Company to divert two ships from the next fleet direct to Jask, there to fill up.

Immediately on the return of the expedition the president at Surat had dispatched another vessel named the *Lion*, whose return, with a cargo giving over one hundred per cent. return, decided them to get a firm grip on so lucrative a trade port. In the autumn of 1619 another fleet under Captain Bickley, having aboard a large sum of money in reals of eight (dollars) and letters from King James to Shah Abbas, arrived at Surat, and went on to Jask to convey the money and add state to the delivery of the letters. The reception of the letters was most gratifying, especially as care had been taken to deliver them in the presence of the Spanish Ambassador, who also had just arrived with letters from his own king.

The Shah vowed that he would keep faithfully all the engagements he had contracted with the English, and "he would sometymes openly proclayme the valour of our nation, soe farre extolling us above the Portugalls that hee woulde tell those forraigne ambassadores then present that he would, maugre all the Portingalls forces, have free trade in all his portes, and sometymes he would secretlie whisper unto us that he had a resolution to tayke Ormuz from the Kinge of Spane's hold, and deliver it unto the English nation only enjoyning us to secrecie until it were effected."

THE JEALOUSY OF THE PORTUGUESE

Meanwhile the progress of the English with the Shah had aroused the Portuguese, who knew how bitterly he resented their commanding position at Ormuz, and realised that the ever-increasing favour of this enterprising and war-like rival threatened not only their Persian trade, but their existence at Ormuz. Hence it was decided to oust the English from the

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Persian ports, and strike a crushing blow at their shipping if found in those seas. With this view the Spanish Ambassador had been specially dispatched with the letters, peremptorily demanding the exclusion of the English from Persia, and a fleet of five war-vessels prepared at Lisbon and placed under the command of the able and brave Ruy Friere d'Andrade, usually called the "Pryde of Portingall," who, before sailing, attended a High Mass, and, before the altar of Lisbon Cathedral, made a solemn vow to rid the Eastern seas of the interloping English.

This fleet sailed early in 1619, but owing to various delays and stopping to examine every vessel under native flags to ascertain if they held a Portuguese trading pass, did not arrive off Ormuz until June 1620. During the interval the English had prospered and gained even more favour, another fleet having reached Persian ports and returned with a profitable cargo. More than this, the Spanish letters were found to contain such peremptory demands for the restitution of territories lately conquered by the Persians and claimed by the Spanish on behalf of their subject king of Ormuz, and for the exclusion of the English, that the enraged Shah publicly tore up the letters and swore that instead of restoring anything he had taken he would drive the Portuguese from Ormuz, and immediately granted the English the monopoly of the sea-borne trade in silks and Persian goods.

Eager to make the best of the present favourable condition, Edward Monnox, now principal factor in Persia, wrote off to Surat for ships and money to bring away and pay for one thousand bales of silk which had been promised him. During the interval Andrew Shilling had reached home with the *Ann* and the Persian silks, and, in February 1620, was placed in command of the fleet of four ships which left Tilbury at the end of that month. These vessels were the *London* (800 tons)

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the *Roebuck* (300 tons), the *Eagle* (600 tons), and the *Hart* (500 tons). The tangible evidence of the Persian silks and the reports of good prospects at Jask induced the directors to order the *Eagle* and *Hart* direct to Jask with their full cargoes, and, accordingly, a few days before reaching Surat, the fleet parted company.

On arrival at Swally Hole, now the regular haven for the Surat factory, President Kerridge at once went aboard and held a consultation in accordance with the rules directing such to be held to decide important matters. Those present were Shilling, Richard Swan, master of the *Roebuck*, Giles James, mate of the *London*, and William Baffin, the Arctic navigator, now master of the *London*. It was now decided that the danger to the two detached vessels was so great that the others should only stay to unload such as was absolutely necessary and take aboard munitions and provisions before sailing to the support or succour of their consorts.

On the 19th November the *London* and her consort left Swally, and, two days later, fell in with the *Nuestra Senhora de Merces*, laden with forty-two Arab horses, a cargo of dates, and "770 chickeens (sequins) and 10,200 laries (about a shilling in value). She had in hir 154 persons of whom 48 were Portugalls the rest of Muscatt." The value of the coin was about £850. On the 6th December the Portuguese were landed, as were most of the others, "saving some Moores whom we detained for our service, and the pilott, who doubting some bad measures from the Portugalls intreted not to be put ashore."

Meanwhile, the *Hart* and the *London* had their share of luck also, having taken two Portuguese vessels *en route* to Dabull, both of which were released after having been plundered of as much as the captors' holds could accommodate, the English taking credit to themselves

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"for neither burninge the shipps, nor the remaynder of the goods, nor hurting anie of hir people. The sayde *Hart* and *Eagle* seeing the Portugall armado used their best meanes to separate them by drawing off some of their shipps; but the Portugalls kept in their joynt strength, wherupon for very approved good consideracions oure shipps layd their course back to Surat to unite with theyre consorts and happily met them about 80 leagues to the estward of Jasques."

THE STOUT FIGHT OFF JASK

On the morning of the 15th the enemy was sighted lying well inshore near Jask, in waters whose depths were unknown to the English. As usual in such circumstances, a consultation was called aboard the Admirall, after which the sacrament was administered to the "Generall" and his officers by the Reverend Patrick Copland, "whose virtous life suting so well with his sound doctrine is the onely menes wherbye to drawe men unto God." In this the saintly Patrick differed much from his fellow parson at Surat, of whom he himself sadly records that, "Such preachers as this can never perswade Japtheth to come and dwell in the tents of Shem. Nay, rather may they harden them in their idolatray."

This done, "Our Admirall with the masters of the fleete went aborde the prize (which had been cleared for the purpose) with barrels of tar, ten barrels of powder, and other combustible provision intending to lay the Portugall Admiral athart the halse and so burne both together. The prize being thus fitted, and all our shipps prepared, we bore up with the men of war. Their fleete consisted of two Portingall galliounes of greater bigness than the *London* and to Flemish shipps (taken from the Dutch) one about the burthen of the *Hart*, and the other mid between the *Eagle* and the

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Roebucke with ten frigatts. Their Generall Ruy Friere de Andrade, their vice admirall John Boralio, and the Dutch shipps commanded by Anthonia Misquitt, and Balthazar de Chaves."

It will not be amiss to pause, and, in plain narrative, visualise these fighting merchantmen of a long past age as they prepare for battle.

At the maintop of the *London* flies the red flag for action, one invariably hoisted alone, unless when paired by another at the mizzen it signified no quarter. A thirty-six gun ship, the *London* carries twelve on the upper deck, exclusive of bow and stern chasers, and ten each in the larboard and starboard batteries on the gun deck, all supplemented by the falconets in the waist deck, and the swivel murtherers pivoted to the bulwarks carrying a load of a handful of musket bullets.

The broadside guns of the lower deck are all culverins and of the upper, demi culverins, all of iron, for the brass cannon were too expensive and less durable than cast-iron guns. Each piece is mounted on a low, solid wooden carriage, itself running on broad wooden wheels, chosen as best fitted to stand the corrosive action of sea-water. Here are no refinements of sights or elevating screws, the one being merely a notch on the breech paired by a projection on the muzzle ring and the other a broad wooden wedge (quoin) driven by a mallet. Such traversing as is required is done by the ever handy handspike.

Each gun is harnessed by a stout rope breeching, itself secured to deck or bulwark rings, and on either side stand neat pyramids of shot confined in a wooden base and flanked by buckets of sand and water, within the former of which stands the lintstock, a forked iron rod, cleft at the top, to hold the match of loose twisted tow, saturated with oil, powder and saltpetre. Between each pair of guns sits the powder-monkey on

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his covered wooden bucket containing powder charges made up in linen cartridges, and, beside him, a smaller one containing priming powder to replenish the priming horns of the gunners.

From gun to gun passes the gunner, checking with a comprehending eye the gun crews and their equipment and allotting the gunners' mates to their batteries, whilst following come the pursers' mates with buckets of welcome rum, from which heartening draughts of fiery spirit disappear into case-hardened gullets. Round each gun clusters its crew of half a dozen cheery rascals bare to the waist and knees, their tarry breeches girt by a belt with brass-hilted hanger and their heads bound with bright-coloured handkerchiefs to keep the sweat from blinding their vision. Each, with rammer, sponge or handspike, stands ready to jump to action at the signal of the mahogany-faced gunner crouched at the breech of "Slapping Sal," or "Big-mouthed Bet," his well-beloved gun.

Around the masts are racks with calivers, muskets, and the short, broad-bladed pike which, even in the Nelsonic sea-fights, was still a favourite of the fighting mariner. Above, in the fighting-tops ringing the top-masts, squat the topmen, each armed with caliver and a store of bombs and stinkpots—not unworthy ancestors of the poison gas of modern days if their composition was well adhered to. Here it follows as culled from the record:

"Take of Powder 101, of ship Pitch 61, of Tar 101, of Saltpetre 81, of Sulphur 41. Now melt all together by a gentle heat and when well Molten, put in, of Seacole Dust 21, of the Filings of Horses hoofs 61, of Assafetida 31, of Sagapanam 11, and of Spatula Fetida half a Pound. Incorporate all well together and now put into the mixture as much of Linnenn, or Woollen Cloaths in shreds, or of Hemp, or Tow as will drink up all the matter. Of this you may now make Balls,

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or Globes of whatever bigness you may please. You may also make these Globes Poysonous if to the Composition be added the following, Arsenick, Mercury, Sinnabar, or Orpiment."

Away up on the quarter-deck, from whence he can command ship, fleet and enemy, stands the "Generall," accompanied by his shipmaster, William Baffin, of Arctic fame. The latter is eyeing, through a ponderous perspective-glass, the Portuguese fleet, a league distant inshore, flaunting innumerable flags and braving, with derisive music, the English ships impotently becalmed beyond range of their own culverins. The English, however, are within range of the cannon royal of the galleons, from which the "Portugalls" fire a few ineffective rounds, and then cease.

Both men are short, thick-set, typical shipmasters. Baffin, a man of about forty-five, with a curling red beard framing a jovial red face lit by piercing china-blue eyes, as bold and keen as of an albatross. Shilling is well on into the sixties, grey haired, white bearded, and with immense shaggy white eyebrows shading faded grey eyes encircled by the innumerable wrinkles and crow's-feet, due to many years of steadfast peering into foul weather or flinching from the blazing sunshine of southern or tropic seas.

From beneath his straggling white beard hangs, low on his short open-necked doublet of russet broadcloth, the silver whistle of his grade in the Royal Navy, one held for life, which, with the broad silver braid band round his wide-brimmed high-crowned beaver hat and the long bowl-hilted sword at his side are the only marks of his commanding rank. His legs are clothed in baggy blue breeches tied at the knee with black cords, grey, west-country hose, while his broad-toed shoon are fastened with strap and buckle.

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THE NARRATIVE OF RICHARD SWAN

We can now follow the better the narrative of Richard Swan, master of the *Roebuck*.

"About nine of the morning we bore up to the Enemy. But immediately we sett sayle it fell calme and son continued untill the evening, the current sett us so neere them that they reached us with their great ordinance. All that night wee kept under sayle. Being the next day the 17th December in the morning, by reason of the land turne (breeze) to leeward of them, they waied their anchores, and setting sayle, made towards our fleete, which attended their coming, albeit they had, and carefullie kept the benifitte of the wind.

"About nine the fight began which continued for nine howres without intermission. In the afternoon, a fine gentle westerlie sea winde blowing and wee to windward of them, their Admirall whether of necessitie to repayre his rudder, or of policie for some conceipted strategem, anchored; and to the eastward of him, his vice admirall and the greater Flemming with the lesser to lee ward of all stopping their leakes. Now, as aforesaid, all our fleete being to windward of them; was the prize (fireship) called unto to put in execution what was before determined, in the greate hope our fire designe would have tayken itts intended effect. Which yett, most likely beeing too soone fired and also forsaken of them which had it in charge prooved altogether a fruitlesse project, driving cleere of all their shipps to their rejoycing, our disgrace, and our imployers losse.

"Our expectacions thus deceived, and they continuing still at anchor, wee, all foure shipps keeping the wind, and turning too and againe close ahead of them, raked them especiallie their Admirall through and through, fore and aft, with our severall broadsides receving from them onlie their prowe and bow peeces. Out of which, as I passed to the northwards in the

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Roebucke, two unfortinatt shotts cut asunder the weather leach ropes of her fore saile, and foretopsaile, in the middle depth of both sailes. Which rending (even) with our boates ahead, and all other our beste indevour wee could nott mayke her staye, but were inforced after trial for reparation of our sailes, to bear up to lee ward betweene them and the shoare.

"In which interim their three greatest shipps plaied upon us with the whole of theire broadsides, yet (to God onely bee the Praise) with lesse hurte than I could have imagined. Thus having compassed the three last mentioned shipps, and luffing to rejoine with our owne fleete which, all this while houlding the benefitte of the wind, plaid upon the Portingalls with their great ordinance as fast as with so manie musketts; I had gotten to windward of the smaller Flemming who standing as I did, untill hee had broughte the fired ship directlie betwene me and him, than turned taile and steered with all the saile hee could make, right before the wind alongst the shoare to the eastwards.

"Whome to rescue the other three set saile, now so gentl that the *Hart* pasing alongst their broadside received from some of them but few, and from others none, of either grete or smal shott. But our fleete at present re-united, now desisted from their further chase by reason of the darknesse of the night and the generall wearinesse challenging a surcease from so toylesome a works, and so anchored after midnight in their before usuall roade. In this fighte the *London* and *Hart* received very little hurt in their hulls and tackling. Lesse, or none amongst their men. I, in the *Roebucke* had one Edward Browne slaine with a grete shott through his head a peece of whose skull together with some splinters of the same shotte wounded Mr. Waller, one of my mates, to the loss of his righte eie, also John Phenix boatswaines mayte and Robert Hepworth, coxons mate both lost their right handes.

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"The *Eagles* mainemast was shotten in five places wherof four were quite thorough, and one John Bankes loast his right arme. Never in so longe a fighte did I heare of soe littell hurt as on our sides. Blessed bee the Lord of Hostes, who was with us, and the God of Jacob who was our Refuge. I cannot trulie particularize their hurts and losses save by repoert of our merchants, that John Boralio, their vice admirall, and another captaine were slaine with thirty or forty Portugalls out of their admiral. Moores they account not in their number of men slaine."

THE PORTUGALLS ARE BROUGHT TO BATTLE

"December 18th. In the morning we had sight of the Portugalls at anchor ten miles to the eastward of us. They had the winde afire to come at us, but did not. Wherupon wee had a general conference whether it might be fitter with the first of the seaturne beginning usuallie aboute noone to stand down to them and trie itt out for the masterie, ere they could receive anie supplie from Ormus or Muscatt, or further expected aid from Goa; or elce to mayke sayle for Jasques Roadeir to land our masters monie and goodes for whose surprizal the Portingalls foughte, and for whose safetie wee mayntayned the quarrell againste them.

"Both which beeing seriously debated, the later was generallie approved fittest, so everie man reparinge to his charge, wee all waied to gain the usual roade of Jasques. Unto which the *London* onelie attained that night, the remaynder riding a league without. On December the 22nd wee landed the monie, and suche of the goods and cloth as time permitted, for descrying the Portugall galliounes open of the road to come in as wee supposed with the seaturne wee made haste to weigh, and stood off with them they steering directly towards Ormuz untill they mett with two, three frigatts

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from thence with supply of menn and munition; which shippt into them they made towards us but presentlie repenting their bargaine they clapt on a tacke and were so fortunate that they beeing to windward we could not get att them without great disadvantage.

"Christmas Day 1620. After dinner we waied withe the seaturne intending to assault them, but we presentlie had a gust of winde and raine against us that enforced us to anchor, insomuch that certaine blacks detained aboard for our service were perswaded that the Portingalls had brought with them from Ormuz a witch to bring them continuallie a faire winde. December 26th. The depth at and neere the place where the Portingalls now were beeinge unknown to anie man in oure whole fleete, we set saile for the ester point of Jasques Roade where wee did fighte it beeing known to us all supposing they would follow us theither which accordingly fell oute for wee were not at anchor before setting saile they came and anchored half a league to the westward of us.

"December 27th. Calme untill noone, wind westerlie in the afternoone, The Portingalls domineering (vainglorying) with musicke flaggs and pendants in their frigatts alongst the shoare. December 28th. Percevinge the drift of this new Fabius Cunctator wee omitted no opportunite to give him battell and about nine of the clocke the Lord giving us a prettie easterlie gale our fleet weighed and putt all things in order for the fight."

ABOARD THE PORTUGALLS

The scene aboard the "Portugalls" is somewhat different.

Up to the main, to the resounding fanfare of many trumpets and the rattling ruffle of drums, slowly and heavily rises the great flag bearing the united arms of

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Spain and Portugal, blazoned in many colours and gleaming with massive broidery, dominating the brilliant pennants and bunting displayed from every shroud and stay of the "Admirall." As it opens to the breeze the company of armoured pikemen and shot lined on both sides of the half-deck bring their ponderous weapons to the salute, the officers bowing low with sword-hilt pressed to the lips in double token of fealty to the Cross and the royal emblems of flag and commander.

High on the quarter-deck stands the "Pryde of Portugall," a commanding figure garbed in black velvet and armoured in steel plate and plumed helmet richly damascened in gold. Around his neck, and hanging low on his breast is the "massy" gold chain and the enamelled and diamond-encrusted Cross of the Order of St. James of Compostello, the highest order of the united kingdoms. His arms are an elaborately guarded sword in whose pommel gleams a ruby, and an ivory-hilted dagger in a gem-encrusted sheath, both weapons dependent from a gold-broidered baldric of red morocco leather matching the high red boots of Spanish leather adorned with wide-rowelled silver spurs.

Grouped around him are his officers, but a trifle less splendid than himself, save for the lean-faced Jesuit priest, who now steps forward to celebrate Mass, and send forward his acolytes to sprinkle with holy water the great crucifix at the bow, and the holy emblems brilliantly painted on the sagging sails. On the outskirts humbly hover the shipmaster and his mates, dingily clad and obsequious to all, for both Spaniard and Portuguese nobles regarded the mariners, high and low, as the veriest of pariahs. The forecastle of the galleons was given over to the soldiers; whilst the seamen fed, lay, and skulked, the butt of all, the only difference between them and the galley slaves being that the seamen were not chained to their oars.

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Viewing the English ships, impotent in the distance, the admiral summons the cringing shipmaster to verify their helplessness in face of wind and tide before descending amidst lowered pikes and reversed muskets to his ample morning meal served on silver plate, while the ship's company champ their sordid meal of sun-dried salt fish and stone-hard biscuit softened with foul water from the scuttle butts, to snuff hatefully, dog-like, the rich odours borne past them by the menials of the high nobility.

THE ENGLISH SCENE

Very different is the scene aboard the four squat-bowed English ships blackening the sea to the eastward. Aboard is no apparent sign of active life other than the look-out men and the mate on watch sturdily stumping the half-deck, now and again pausing to eye with sour contempt the approach of the yellow-painted, gaudily bedecked galleons from which noisy bursts of music float towards them. As the enemy standards begin to show clear in the morning air, he stays his grumpy march to growl an order to the mossy-chested, tarry boatswain attendant upon him.

Then comes a blast of shrill whistling, toe-stirring or none too tender kicking, accompanied by hurricane-quelling roars from a throat brazened by storms and rum. Grumblingly responding, the crew stir around their guns and lift their hardened bodies from the deck, a sardonic wit blaming the cross-grain of the planking for his aching bones. Another whistle from the boatswain and away to the mastheads climbs the red flag of battle and the Cross of St. George, lazily and unceremoniously.

A few moments later the "Generall" with shipmaster and mates and factors comes forth, and, after minutely inspecting all the preparations for the coming

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fight, ascends to the half-deck, whereon stands the altar improvised by the saintly Patrick Copland, and orders the crew to be summoned for divine service and the blessing of God on the coming fight. With ill grace, as ever with fighting men of the bulldog breed, the tarry *worshippers* mutteringly endure the prosy periods of the good man's exhortation, and it is all too regrettable to note that the boatswain and his mates are busily employed in blocking the retreat of stealthy skulkers.

The service is concluded with a benediction to which all listen reverently, some mayhap the more devoutly because it closes the penance, and the boatswain pipes to breakfast. No set meal, this, for then as now your merchant seaman was "housed like a beast and fed like a pig, though not so bountifully."[1] Around the decks, all hands being at quarters or on watch, pass the ship's boys and the cook's mates with wooden buckets (kids) of pork and pease, sodden together, and bags of iron hard biscuit, maybe as meaty as the pork itself or as populous as a breeding beehive.

A dozen or so men gather round the provisions, each in turn hacking off a portion of junk with his sheath knife, scooping up a handful of boiled pease in his hook-pot, and, having grabbed a biscuit or two from the bread-bag, retires to his post to wolf the meal which would nauseate all but the hardy mariner, used to nothing better from birth. Then comes the *bonne bouche* of the feast: buckets of flat, muddy-looking beer being brought round and tipped, a quart per man, into the hook-pot, now emptied of meat and pease. For such luxuries as tea and coffee were still two hundred years beyond the reach of the mariner.

The meal completed, the decks are slushed of the debris, small though it be, and another shrill whistle heralds the approach of the purser's mate with the rum bucket, from which a battle-dram is handed out to

[1] Plimsol.

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each amid injunctions to the foxy-eyed Ganymede to "keep thy scurvy thumb out of the measure," for a skilful use of that will leave Ganymede an appreciable surplus wherewith to regale himself or sell to a thirsty mariner. Such being the scene, let Richard Swan again take up the narrative.

THE FINAL FIGHT

"Christmas Day 1620. After dinner we waied with the seaturne intending to assault them, but presentlie we had a gust of wind and raine against us that inforced us to anchor, insomuch that certaine blackes detained abord for our service, after their heathenish fashion were perswaded that the Portingalls had brought with them from Ormus a witch to bring them continuallie a faire winde.

"December 26. The depth at and neere the place where the Portingall now were being unknowne to anie man in our fleete wee set saile for the eastern point of Jasques Roade where wee first did fight supposing that they woulde follow us thither to settle our business which accordingly fell out, for wee were not at anchor before they, setting saile, came and anchored half a league to the westward of us.

"December 27th. Calme untill noone; wind westerlie in the afternoon. They domineering with musicke. flaggs and pendants in their shipps and frigatts alongst the shoare. December 28th. Innocents day. At lengthe, persevinge the drift of this new Fabius Cunctator, wee omitted no opportunitie to give him battell, so about nine of the clocke, the Lord giving us a prettie easterlie gale; our fleete waied and put all things in order for a fighte. The *London* and the *Hart* anchored within a cables length and a halfe from them on their broadsides, and so indured the hotest burthen of the second days fight.

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"No sooner were they at anchor but that it fell calme and son continued all day. Insomuch as the *Roebucke* and *Eagle*; who beeing somewhat asterne and steeringe neere the shoare with intent to anchor, the one upon the bowe of the Portugall Admirall, and the other on the bowe of the Vice Admirall, could not, notwithstanding all diligence used, come to do anie service in halfe an houres space, and no sooner were wee within the levell range of our ordinance, than that, not a breath of air was to be felt and the current beeing against us, wee were constrained to anchor, or to drive farther off.

"But, our broadsides once brought to bear, the grete ordinance from our whole fleete plaied so faste upon them, that doubtlesse if the knowledge in our people had been answerable to theire willing mindes and redie resolucions, not one of those galliounes, unless their sydes had become impenetrable had escaped us. About three of the clocke in the afternoon unwilling after so hot a dinner to receive the like supper; they cutt thyre cables, and drove with the tyde then setting westerlie untill they were without range of oure gunnes. And then theyre frigatts came and towed them awaie, wonderfully mangled and torne.

"Their admirall in the gretest furie of the fight was inforced to heeld his shipp to stopp hir leakes, his mainmast being overboard and the head of his fore topmast. The greter Flemming both his top masts shott overboard and part of his bowspritt shott awaie. The lesser Flemming never a shrowd standing, never a topmast. The vice admirall who both daies did us most hurt escaped best for most commonlie he this daie had one or other of their shipps betweixt him and us. We kept them companie all night in hope next morning to have given all or some of them their passports.

"But surveying our shotte and finding small store

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left notwithstandinge that by some happie mistake the *Eagle* had a double proportion, out of which the other shipps were in some part supplied, and withall having to consider the voyage we were to performe wee resolved our return to Jasques for the spedie dispatch of our worthie imployers busines there and desisted from their further chase; leaving them doubtless glad men the two greter shipps towing at their sternes the smaller. The number of their dead and wounded in this conflict I cannot report, as not having, during our stay at Jasques heard so much as their arrival at Ormus.

"On our parte were slaine. In the *London* Henrie Crane, John Goare slaine, our Admirall wounded, Peter Robinson wounded and both afterward died. William Hall and John Muskett both hurt, but now perfectly recovered. In the *Hart* Walter Davie slaine Edmund Okeley wounded, but, though now lame, recovered. Of grete shotte of severall sorts spent in bothe fights the *London* 1382, *Hart* 1024; *Roebucke* 815, *Eagle* 800 the totall, 4021.

"January 6th. Our worthie Admirall in the beginning of the second days fight, receved a great and grievous wound through his left shoulder by a grete shotte, which hurt, hee with suche courage and patience underwent that gave great hopes to us of his much wished recoverie; But having, besides the former wound, two of the uppermost ribbs on the left side broken, this daie about noone he departed this life, shewinge himselfe, as ever before a resolute commander. so now, in his passage through the gates of death, a most willing, humble and constant Christian. His body we intended to have carried to Surat, and there, according to his desertes to have performed the last rightes, the chyrurgions confidently promising that by imbalming, and wax cloth to preserve him with no annoyance whatever, But notwithstanding this cost and

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their promise his body proved so noysome that we were inforced to bury it at Jasques.

"In the after opening the white box No. 1 Captain Richard Blith accordinge to order therin succeeded as Admirall, and by a Consultacion William Baffin was continued Master of the *London* myselfe beeing removed into the *Hart*, Christopher Browne into the *Roebucke*, and Thomas Taylor made Master of the *Eagle*."

The white box herein mentioned was one of three shipped in each vessel at the commencement of the cruise or voyage. Each was sealed and contained the nominations of the Court of Directors for the command of the fleet or vessel in the event of the death of the commander, or anything necessitating his removal. The minor vacancies were filled up by vote of the consultation as shown in this particular case.

So much for one of the fights of the olden time which established the English supremacy in the Persian Gulf. The casualties may seem trivial, but it should be remembered that these sea actions of merchant ships were all fought at cannon range, boarding being impossible by reason of the limited number of the crews. The combatants were all more or less under cover, the shot were solid and with only strength enough behind them to penetrate one side of the ship, the scantling of which was extremely solid, and, as will be seen by the description of the wounds, deadly or otherwise, all were caused by direct hits from cannon shot, except that of the mate, who lost his eye through being hit with a fragment of another's skull.

But even the losses in land battles up to the end of the eighteenth century were slight. For instance, Plassey cost the lives of four Europeans and fourteen sepoys only, and the battle of Wandiwash but one soldier killed and half a dozen wounded. There are many others, borne on regimental colours, where the casualties were almost as paltry.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ADVENTUROUS CAREER OF CAPTAIN JOHN WEDDELL (1621–1639)

HARRYING THE PORTUGALLS—THE SITUATION IN THE PERSIAN GULF—THE SHAH AND THE ENGLISH—AN ATTACK ON ORMUZ—THE PLUNDER OF ORMUZ—THE DUTCH AND ENGLISH FIGHT THE PORTUGALLS, 1624—WEDDELL JOINS THE ROYAL NAVY—WEDDELL BECOMES AN INTERLOPER—WEDDELL GOES TO CHINA

HARRYING THE PORTUGALLS

THE harrying of the Portugalls does not stop with Captain Shilling. Of the many able seamen who served the merchant venturers during the first half-century of their existence, none had a more distinguished and chequered career than John Weddell of Ratcliffe in the county of Middlesex.

Born in the year 1587, we find no record of his early life and services, where, or when, until the year 1618, when, being then master's mate of the *Dragon*, he was given command of the *Lion* in the fleet of five ships commanded by Captain Robert Bonner which left England in the spring of 1618. Owing to the *Lion* having been detached at Surat for a voyage to Mocha, she escaped the fate which befell the remainder of the fleet which was surprised by a strong squadron of the Dutch and captured in reprisal for the taking of the Dutch ship *Black Lion* by the English. Bonner was killed in this action.

The *Lion*, with Weddell still in command, returned to England with a most profitable cargo in 1620, and probably in recognition of his services, Weddell was

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appointed general of the 1621 fleet, consisting of the *Dolphin* (600 tons), the *Lion* (500 tons); the *Jonas* (800 tons); and the *Whale* (?), all of whom sailed from Tilbury on the 19th March 1621, with orders to pick up and take on to India the *Richard* (20 tons) and the *Rose* (100 tons), two small vessels which had been sent out some months before to cruise along the African coasts, east and west, to view out the land for trading stations.

On the 30th June the combined fleet arrived at the bay of St. Augustine on the south-west coast of Madagascar, the next stopping-place from the Cape, where "wee had grete store of fresh vittles, as beefes, sheepe, goats, and hennes, as much as wee could desire, and very goode and cheape, for the people wolde take no money but silver chanies and counterfeit bludstones (bits of ruby glass). The people there were very boulde, for they wolde come abord and eate and drinke with us. But wee coulde never see that they were treacherous, or theevish, though verie laiing (lying)." The next stoppage was at the Comoro Islands, the last place where vessels "refreshed" before stretching away for the coasts of India, which they left six days later.

Their progress across the Indian Ocean was very leisurely, Swanley recording that "from the last day of August to the 15th day of September wee bore a slacke sayle to linger oute the tyme for coming upon the coaste of Suratt, for feare of foul weather which comonly continueth untill the 16th or 20th of September." In order to make the slow sailing a little less monotonous, perhaps, the ships occasionally made merry, as, for instance, on the 4th September, which is recorded as a "merry day there beeing a feaste held aborde the *Dolphin*. Beeing all verie merry in the evening, when the Captaine came from thence, there were three peeces shott off. So itt plesed God that with one of the peeces Hugh Woodcoack being in

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the skiffe under the stern was shott over, so that noe man knew what was become of him, onely a peece of his cap beeing founde in the ships sterne."

The fleet, from which the *Richard* had been detached at Comoro to investigate the eastern coast of Africa up to Mozambique, arrived at Surat on the 21st September, and, on the 24th, in came the *Richard* with a Portuguese carrack of some 250 tons bound from Mombasa to Goa with a cargo of "elephants' teeth, turtle shell, sea-horse teeth, gumme and negroes," the whole worth about £50,000. Though Richard Swanley, from whose log of the cruise the foregoing items are taken, dismisses the capture very curtly as not immediately concerning his own vessel, we shall not do so, for the account set down in Purchas is such a sea epic of the time that it is well worth rescuing from his pages, if only for a brief spell.

Thomas Wilson, chirurgeon of the *Dolphin*, thus graphically records:

"I will certifie you concerning the wonderful and strange manner of the *Richards* taking of a Portugall ship that came from Bumbasse. She was a rich prize laden with Elephants teeth, Turtel Shels in Barrels, with Wax, Seahorses Teeth, and a certaine Gumme and Negroes, the which I make no doubt that you have heard already. The chiefe cause of theire taking was one John Filps, who bade them be of good cheare their being but thirteene men and Boyes (in the pinnace), and told them that he would dismount their Peece presently, which they were a discharging, the which he did.

"Plying the tow Peeces (falconets) it was his fortune to kill the cheife Merchant, who was going to encourage his men to fighte; which their Gunner perceeving, traversed another Peece of Ordinance against them; he was no sooner espied by this Filps, but he made a shott at the Peece but mist it; the shott flew betweene

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the Gunners legs as he was going to give fire; he forthwith threw away his Linstocke like a man distraught, and full of feare, and told them it was their ill fortune to be taken. But the *Richard* plied still both her Peeces, and comming neerer to them, this Filps stept upon the Forecastle bidding them amayne (loudly) to yeeld, which they presently did, and lowered all their sayles.

"So they called unto them to bring aborde their Master Merchant, Pilot, and Boatswaine. They puld up theire boat and did it and when they came aborde they were bound and putt into hold. Their were two merchants in this ship, the one kild, and the other was he who came aborde, who confest that the Elephants Teeth which were in her cost £6000 at the first Penny, in Bumbasse which to bee carried from Goa to Cambaia would yeeld at the least £18,000, besides eight Barrels of Turtel shell which were the Merchantes that were slaine, and that hee had in that ship of his owne £3000 more which was in wax, Seahorse Teeth, Gumme, and Negroes.

"They sent the Boatswaine for the rest of the Portugalls who brought back fourteene more which every one of them brought their Skretaries (document cases) and keys and presented them to Mr. Davis (the master) who carefullie layd them bye. These 14 Portugalls remayned in the Boate that they thoughte to be all the Portugalls of the shipp. This Filps then went abord with three Men, and three Boyes. They had no sooner entred the shipp and veered the boate asterne with the Portugalls but the shipp seemed full of Portugalls and others there.

"There were in all, of the Portugalls seventie five, of the Negroes Men, Women and Children Ninetie, likewise fortie men of Chaul that were their mariners, that strucke such amazement amongste them being but seven that it daunted them much. This Phillips bidding them bee of good cherre and take courage, for he wold

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lessen their number presentlie, the whiche in two houres time he thus effected. Hee placed his Men upon the poope and half deck with their Peeces primed and their matches cockt, if any should resist to fire upon them.

"This done hee went with his Sword and disarmed all the Portugalls, and caused all their arms to be layd on the poope which were thirty Muskets readily laden and primed, forty Rapiers besides Swords and Poniards, sixty Powder Potts ready laden and primed, forty Launces and Pikes and fifteen great Chambers belonging to eight Peeces of Ordinance ready primed (these were apparently breech-loading cannon). Then hee found grete store of musket shott which hee brought up also. Then hee tooke the chamber and opened them and tooke out of them a goodlie quantitie of Powder, and in the roome therof he put in Muskett shott and tamked (tamped) them up againe.

"This also done he bound them fast to the deckes around him, and primed them and caused three Linsstockes to be lighted and with his small Shot (musketeers) standing by him caused such amazement amongst the Portugalls that it made them to tremble, not knowing what they did determine (were going to do). Hee giving order to his small Shott that if any should resist him they shoulde lett flie as they thought fitt he steps forth into the wast, and called the Boatswaine unto him demanding of him how many of his Countrymen there were in the shipp. He sayde there were fortie, so hee promised them to saye, if so be as they woulde bee willing and to do theire best indevors he would advance their meanes and their adventures rather than to diminish any parte therof (return each his private property); which wordes so greatly heartened them, that they said they were all willing.

"Then presentlie he called up the Blackes to hayle up the Boate placing two of his Men with theire Musketts bent to the Boate that none of the Portugalls

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therin should enter the shipp. Which done hee drewe his sworde, and happie was hee who should go firste for some lept into the water for feare. Besydes them that they tooke into the Boate to them, there were three which hid themselves in the shipp that they knewe not of being almost starved on account they durst not come out for feare."

Such a crew and leader were, without doubt, well worthy of the 2000 reals of eight which Weddell accused them of having helped themselves to. It is very probable that they would have appropriated the 2600 pieces of eight subsequently found hidden in the ballast had they known of its existence, and who should grudge it to them, seeing that their bravery and the leadership of the redoubtable John Phillips (his proper name) had added £50,000 to the Company's riches? Nor was this the only prize, for on the 30th the *Andrew*, formerly the Portuguese vessel named the *Nuestra Senhora de Remedios*, which had been taken by Shilling's fleet returning from Jask and so named, brought in a "Mogul shipp value £3000 which was taken coming from the Red Sea upon consideracion of wrong done to our merchants by robbing of their caffal."

Unfortunately for Weddell the Dutch were also out on the prowl, and, in view of his own most questionable proceedings, it is amusing to note his virtuous indignation as expressed in his letter of the 12th October 1621:

"I gretely feare the Dutches have caught the bird wee soe long have expected, they having taken of the jounckes belonging to theise partes of the Mogulls dominions, and have suncke her with them that were in her and taken three or foure more of Dabull and Diu out of which they have tayken to the valew of two tonn of gold besydes other treasure invallueable; which irregular course of theirs will I feare, fall heavy upon us, if they bee suffered to carry away this spoyle

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and wee be left destitute of those present menes of satisfaction we have expected for our present losses. In suche case be plesed to certifie whether I should cese her out of their hands."

However, the permission was not given, which was just as well, for at the moment the Dutch were very strong in Indian waters. A casual mention of prize-money being paid to the captors of the Portuguese carrack induces us to hope that he to whom the capture was really due received a proportionate reward.

THE SITUATION IN THE PERSIAN GULF

The position in the Persian Gulf at this date is worthy of study. Though the defeat of the Portuguese fleet had been severe, its actual effect on their shipping strength had been small, for such vessels were easily repaired, and there were ample facilities for this, and vast stores of munitions at Ormuz and Kishm, the latter an island about ten miles from Ormuz, on the easternmost point of which Ruy Friere had just built a strong fort, under whose guns his ships could lie up and repair or re-fit.

In addition he had been strengthened by some more galleons and frigates from Goa, bringing his force up to five large galleons, two ships taken from the Dutch some time before, and about twenty frigates, the latter small, armed country vessels built to move under sails or oars and especially useful for reconnoitring or towing disabled ships in calms or when incapable through loss of masts. With these he dominated the Persian coast, bombarding, burning, and plundering the towns and villages and sinking ships and boats wherever found. This command of the sea rendered English trade very difficult, for though very large stocks had accumulated at Gombroon since the last ship had left, it was impossible to bring them away and replenish the factory

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with new goods from home, unless a very strong fleet was sent. Fortunately this was available, there being now at Swally the greatest number of English ships ever yet assembled in Indian waters, these comprising the six vessels brought out by Weddell, and three remaining from that formerly under Shilling. Of the latter it was absolutely necessary to "dispeed" home the *Hart* and *Roebuck* with part of the freight accumulated at Surat.

On the 25th November the whole fleet left Swally, the *Hart* and *Roebuck*—aboard which was the retiring president, Kerridge—parting company with a God-speed salute ten miles from the port. The remainder, under the joint command of Blyth (who had succeeded Shilling) and Weddell, comprised the *London* (800 tons), the *Jonas* (700 tons), the *Whale* (600 tons), the *Dolphin* (600 tons), and the *Lion* (500 tons), with whom were the *Rose*, *Robert*, *Shilling*, and the *Richard*, all small vessels or pinnaces acting as tenders or store ships. Though no direct instructions were given as to fighting, both commanders and the new president at Surat knew that it was inevitable and were prepared for a sea battle, though not for the land operations they subsequently became involved in.

THE SHAH AND THE ENGLISH

Their arrival near Gombroon on the 4th December was eagerly hailed by the Shah as the means of crushing the common enemy, and he at once opened negotiations with the commanders for their aid in an attack on the islands of Kishm and Ormuz, and in this was joined by Edward Monnox, the factor in charge at Gombroon. For some time the joint commanders hesitated, for the responsibility lay with them, Monnox having no power to give orders to the fleets, other than for lading and departures. The difficulties were great. The English

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and the Portuguese were at peace in Europe, and, not only this, but King James was known to be very friendly with the Spanish king. It was most likely that if the enterprise was a failure he would, as he had done with Raleigh, throw his countrymen to the Spanish wolves as a peace-offering.

Another adverse point was the danger of pitting wooden ships against the stone walls of the forts of Ormuz and Kishm, still further strengthened by the fleet of Ruy Friere, in itself stronger than that of the English, and, in addition, the English ships were merely armed merchantmen manned by crews only partly trained to handle big guns and quite untrained in shore fighting. Above all there was the Company to be considered, for if the enterprise was unsuccessful they might lose their ships, and, in any case, would be out the value of the ammunition and stores expended, besides the loss of the voyage to Bantam—for which Weddell's fleet was destined after discharging at Surat —which, at the least, would be delayed for six months.

Long and anxiously were the points debated, until the scale was turned by the conditions offered by the Shah, which were that the plunder should be equally divided, that the Shah should pay half the expenses, that the future customs revenue of Ormuz should be divided, and that all Christian captives should be made over to the English. To this was added the arguments of Monnox that unless the Portuguese power in the Gulf was crushed, all future trade for the English was impossible. The upshot was that the captains eventually agreed to attack, and it says much for their personality that they should have undertaken operations of such high importance the results of which to themselves might have been very grave. The correspondence leads to the conclusion that the dominating spirit was Weddell, both in the negotiations and the fighting, one which is verified by his subsequent career.

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But though the commanders had made up their minds the crews had to be reckoned with, "they alleadging that this was no merchandizing business nor were they hired for any such exploits. Wee opposed ourselves againste the wilful opposition and peremptory refusall of so honourable an enterprize mayde by the unrulye multitude who in the end not without greate labour were soe farre pacefyed and also sattisfyed to proceed and be ruled by their commanders." As a matter of fact the crews were "pacefyed" by the promise of an extra month's pay, compensation for wounds or death, and the plunder of Ormuz. The former they received; the latter they did not, though unofficially there is no doubt but that masters and men did themselves very well.

AN ATTACK ON ORMUZ

All being settled, on the 22nd January "Wee ankored before Ormose in the expectacion that our dareynge but dastardly enemie would have come forth to fight us with his five gallyones and two smale shipps besides frigetts and boates a sufficient number; but they for their more securitie haled their gallyones and other vessels close abord the castle by which menes wee could not get att them. Understandinge that our vowed enemie Rufrero who had tayken the Sacrament in Portugall to ruine our trade in thes partes was himself in his newly erected castle at Kishm, wee sett sayle, and arrived the same daye about none, and finding suffitient water to bringe our shipps within faulkin (150 yards) shott it was resolved by consultacion to bringe our enemies to a banquet of fyer flyinge bulletts the ensuing morninge.

"Which when they perseved they weived us with naked swords; wherupon in Christian like compassion Edward Monnox was sent on shoare to parley with

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them after one, wiser than the rest, had hung out a white napkin." The terms offered not being suitable, "wee resolved to trie the strength of his castle with our ordynance which was performed by our whole fleete with 1000 shott by which wee kild him some 30 men with some breaches mayde in his wall but nott so much as wee intended. Wherupon wee gave it over; and resolved on the landing of five peeces of our ordynances to batter him neerer at hand which was in two or three dayes soe well followed that wee dismounted three or foure peeces of his ordynance.

"Master Baffin being then abord promised that hee woulde goe ashore to make a shoot or two wherupon John Phillips got leave of our captain for the like, and seeing their work of barrering and finding their platform on the one side hollow resting on a basket within the reverse of the Peece which caused the Peece to deliver contrary; which when he had perseved he cawsed the platforme to bee new cast, and the planks layd firme; hee then loaded the Peece himself and placed it to the best level towards a peece of Ordinance which lay on the Castle wall which the Portugall gunner was even then redy to fire for they were at that a levealling; hee fired his Peece so leavelled, which dismounted their Peece, split the carriage and killed sixe men wherof the Captaine of the Castle was one. He made but two shotts by reason there was no moare shott ashore.

"Master Baffin went ashoare with his Geometricall Instruments, for the taking of the height and distance of the Castle Wall for the better leavelling of his Peece to make his shott; but as he was aboute to aim he receved a small shott from the Castle Wall in his belly wherewith he gave three leapes and dyed immediately."

On the 1st February Ruy Friere surrendered on promise of good quarter, and being sent to Surat with the remainder of the Christian prisoners, a compact

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which was honourably carried out, over two hundred, including Ruy Friere and ten of his officers, being sent away in the *Lion*, the *Rose*, and the *Richard*. On arrival at Surat Ruy Friere managed to escape by making his guard drunk, as he alleged, though the Company alleged that he gave them a bribe of £1000 to permit him to escape. The other prisoners were sent to Goa. The total casualties to the English were three men killed and two wounded.

The fleet now sailed for Gombroon, from whence the vessels with the prisoners were dispatched to Surat and three thousand Persian soldiers embarked, after which they again sailed and arrived off Ormuz on the 10th February. The joint letter from Monnox, Blyth, and Weddell describing the siege, runs:

"We, having landed tooke the cytty without anie manner of resistance, the Portugalls having betaken themselves to the citadel. Having landed ordinance the Persians used such diligence that with threnches and mynes on the 17th March following a breach was made by blowen up a portion of the castle wall; but it was so well defended by the Portugalls that the Persians were forced to retyre. But our endevors, both from the shore with our ordinance and other strategems of fire having been cheefely to bring destruction to his armado which one after another wee have effected in the ruine of five galliounes, one galley and so manie frigatts that wee left them wholly destitute of these helpes eyther for escape or other."

Touching the destruction of these vessels the person principally responsible seems to have been the gallant John Phillips aforesaid. None of the reports of the principal officers mention him, but luckily for those who love intimate detail, Thomas Wilson, surgeon of the *Dolphin*, has left us a full account, which runs:

"This Phillips seeing that the enterprise tooke none effect towards the evening, came close under the Castle

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Wall with his frigatt, having an eye to the ports of the Castle, and hearing that they had got the ordinance out of their shipps whilst it was yet day went in resolutely and discharged his sacar, and it beeing lowe water and the shipps aground, shot one of them thorow her Skeg, or Run close by the water; and when the water flowed (the tide rose) her holde filled, then the water ebbing againe shee cleane overset and brake all her fastes that she had against the wall which were Cables and Hawsers. This shipp was the Admirall that came from Goa called *Todos los Santos*; she was of burthen fifteen hundred tunnes, and carried in her forty five peeces of ordinance of Brasse the least of which was Demi Culveringe. Shee was the cause of all the others oversetting which lay by her with their toppes in the water."

To continue Monnox:

"Suche was the Portugalls care to save the Brasse ordinance that was in their galliounes that they landed them all before their shipps were runed, which ordinance with those in the Castle are upwards of 200 Peeces the most of them beeing cannon, demi cannon whole culveringe, and demi culveringe of a great valew. The cytty yeelded us by estimacion about £12,000. What the castle will yeeld we know not as yet."

THE PLUNDER OF ORMUZ

Though the wealth of Ormuz was undoubtedly very great, in the end the Company profited but little, if indeed, anything, for all they appear to have got was the £12,000 mentioned by Monnox, and the value of the cannon, stores, and merchandise taken, which would probably not have amounted to more than £50,000. Out of this they had eventually to pay the Duke of Buckingham, then Lord High Admiral of England,

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£12,000, and King James another £10,000. When to this was added the cost of the ammunition, etc., expended, and that of the detention of a large fleet for eight months beyond its time, it becomes evident that, if they did not lose, all they actually gained was the destruction of the Portuguese monopoly.

But if the Company did not gain there can be small doubt but that their master mariners and seamen did, for they had the unrestricted opportunity of plunder for many days before it was found out and stopped; or, perhaps better, stayed a trifle.

Of the plunder of Ormuz, Sir Herbert Thomas wrote:

"The Company had no doubt, been enriched by two millions of pounds (though but their share) had it not been prevented by a rascal mariner's covetousness, who, though he knew the danger of his life and the loss of the Christian's credit; yet stole into a monastery sealed with both consents, and committed sacrilege upon the silver lamps, chalices, crucifixes, and other rich ornaments and stuffed so full that in descending his theft cried out against him, and he was taken by the Persians, and drubbed right handsomely.

"But the greatest mischief came herby unto the English, for the perfidious Pagans, though they knew the merchants were not guilty of this transgression, and had not broke the order yet went to their Duke, saying, 'Shall we sit idle, whilst the English, by stealth and strategy, exhaust all our hopes of benefits and riches?' Wherat the Duke, glad of such advantage, replied, 'If so, go and have your desires'! Wherupon they broke open and robbed the houses and stores of what was valuable, whilst the confident sailors lay a bragging of their victories a-shipboard. And when they were possesd of what was done they exclaimed as men possesed. But the Persians understood them not nor cared what their meaning was, seeing it verified by the adage 'give the losers leave to prate.'

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"Yet they found leave to throw away no small amount; thus sufficiently showing their luxurious mind and prodigality, if they had gotten more, dicing, whoring, brawling, and tippling being all the relics of their husbandry. Only their Captain Woodcock had both good luck and bad, he lighting on a frigatt that stole away unwitting to the enemy, loaden with pearls and treasure that he took for a prize, and kept all to himself, perhaps half a million worth in ryall, or more.

"But see? ill fortune. The *Whale* of which he was master rich loaden with his own and his masters goods, being hard by Swalley Hole without the Barre, sunk, and was swallowed by the sands occasioned by a hole neglected by the carpenter, failing to carine, and mend her (and) the ports being open took in water which to prove that mere whales are subject to destruction, perished in that merciless water."

According to the evidence given before the Court of Directors the *Whale* was top-heavy, owing to ballast having been removed to make room for light plunder, and many tons of valuable brass guns loaded on her upper deck. In this condition she was caught in a squall off the Bar of Surat, and, capsizing, went down in deep water on a sandy bottom, becoming a total loss, and drowning many of the crew and native passengers.

The amount that was lost may not be over-estimated, for the Spanish Ambassador, when placing his complaint before King Charles, produced evidence that the *London* alone brought home £500,000 in money and value, and that her crew during the voyage home ate off silver plate bearing the crests of many noble families. They may have taken the plate, but that they used it we decline to believe for reasons that will suggest themselves.

Though the ships returned to Surat in September their crews were so sickly, and so many died, that they

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were compelled to wait three months to enable the men to recover and complete the crews from the coasters, which, in those days, were also manned with English seamen, the lascar being set down as just as expensive and far less efficient. On 30th December 1622 the ships left Swally and arrived at Tilbury on the 22nd June 1623. A fortnight later Weddell was cited before the Admiralty to give evidence as to the value of the plunder taken, in order to assess the percentage due both to the King and the Lord High Admiral, who, as has been stated, made quite a good thing out of the taking of Ormuz, though done without their sanction and without costing either a single penny.

THE DUTCH AND ENGLISH FIGHT THE PORTUGALLS, 1624

His next command was that of the 1624 fleet, consisting of four ships and two pinnaces, which arrived at Surat in mid-October of that year. During the interval the Portuguese fleet had been recuperated and added to by a number of galleons from Lisbon, with which Ruy Friere, who had escaped from captivity under romantic circumstances, was now harrying the Persian coast and making the Gulf unsafe for the ships of both Dutch and English.

Though the two nations were bitter commercial rivals, they decided to join forces for the voyage, both being laden with valuable cargoes for their respective establishments and expecting to bring away similar freights. It was therefore a matter of mutual safety to present a combined fleet, so, though sailing at different times, the Dutch and English fleets entered Persian waters together, and in February 1625 fought a great battle with the Portuguese in the Straits of Ormuz. As this battle, which comprised a series of connected actions, is fully described in a subsequent

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article, we refer the reader to that, and take up our narrative from the return of the fleet to Surat after its victory.

Leaving the *Jonas* to proceed in search of the *Anne*, which had been driven ashore near Mocha, Weddell and the remainder went on to Bantam, his two pinnaces, with the luck that so often attended these light and fast-sailing craft, picking up a couple of Portuguese junks by the way, which, after being duly plundered, were turned loose without further harm. On 23rd October he returned from Batavia to Swally to be greeted with the news of the defeat of Blyth's squadron of four ships on their outward voyage, who had been surprised and cut up by a Portuguese fleet under Ruy Friere and Botelho. As this catastrophe and the gallant episode of the *Lion*, one of Blyth's ships, is also described in a subsequent article, we need say no more here on the subject, except to remark that Weddell's attempt to induce the Dutch to join him in a search for Botelho failed.

However, the joint fleet sailed for Gombroon on 24th November 1625, with orders to engage the Portuguese, if met. As, however, Botelho had taken refuge in "Bombayee Hole," nothing was seen of him, so the fleets went on to Gombroon, where they were informed of the fate of the *Lion*. Weddell returned to Surat in January 1626, where, finding a number of Dutch vessels in harbour, he again proposed a joint expedition in search of Botelho, which also was declined by the Dutch, who saw no use in looking for trouble.

WEDDELL JOINS THE ROYAL NAVY

In April he sailed for home with the heavy-laden fleet, arriving in November 1625. In December he was again indicted for excessive private trade, and though he put forward his exceptional services in

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mitigation of punishment, was fined heavily and his name entered in the Black Book. Incensed at this treatment, he declined an offer of further employment and accepted the command of the royal ship *Rainbow* from the Duke of Buckingham. On this ship which, much to the annoyance of the directors, he manned with "prime seamen" from their ships, he served in an expedition to the coast of France and earned commendation and a promise of presentation to the King.

He remained with the Navy until the end of 1628, when, probably finding the service poorly paid, and devoid of other attractions, he quitted it and returned to the Company, by whom he was given command of the outgoing fleet of 1629, consisting of the *Charles*, the *Discovery*, the *Reformation*, and a pair of pinnaces named the *Samuel* and the *Swallow*. The usual luck of these small craft deserted them in this case, for the *Samuel* was blown up by her own captain to save her from the Portuguese under the following circumstances, reported by President Wylde:

"Yet did twelve frigatts, this 6th December past attempt the firing of the *Wesopp* (*Wasp*) of the Dutches, with 24 peeces of ordinance, and your barke *Samuell* riding att the rivers mouthe. Eight fell upon the former, and four on the latter. The Dutch, fyred in tow places, yett bravely extinguished, defended themselves, burnt two, and sunck another of the frigatts. But the *Samuells* master, improvidentally laying a trayne expecting they would have borded him, fired (prematurely) and blewe himself and all his people overboard, lamentable burnt, and spoyled, himself and 15 more saved by the Dutch; others so many perished, or tayken prisoners; the vessel with one of the frigatts burnt."

Though the other pinnace escaped any trouble on this voyage, she was, on the next, the cause of one of the finest of the Company's ships being lost, and, with

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it, the final severance of Weddell's connection with the Company. The 1632 fleet arrived at Surat in December 1633, and in accordance with the usual custom one of her pinnaces was sent in advance to Bantam to inform the factors, in time to collect the home lading. The disaster which lost the Company one of their finest ships, and a cargo valued at £130,000, is thus described:

"The Pinass *Swallow* took her departure for Java on January 11th 1633, and, in passing by her Admiral, she fyred three guns for salute. In so doing the gun room caught fire by the port being open, and the pinass burnt to the waters edge with such vehemence that it was impossible to quench the flames. The burning ship was close to the *Charles*, and her anchor being inconsiderately lett fall she ran aboard the Great ship and sett her alight, so that she also burnt to the waters edge.

"Itt being propunded where to settle Captain Weddell and hee, being clered by the generall attestacion of all the commanders from any negligence or omission in the preservation of his shipp (he was ashore) the generall council have enordered him commander of the *Jonas*, and the rest of the fleet. Yet, understandinge that the master of the *Swallow*, his two maytes, gunner, and gunners mayte were the chiefe occasion of setting their shipp on fire, and consequently the *Charles* it is decided to send them home in the *James*, and all of them to remain in irons until their arrival in England." The gun-room had been left open, and some burnt wadding blew back through the ports.

But though cleared by the council at Surat, the directors were so angry at the loss incurred by the burning of the two vessels, amounting to over £150,000 in all, that they sent out orders to supersede Weddell immediately and send him home as a passenger in the

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first ship. In protesting against the injustice of this decision, the council recorded that

"Captain Weddell is a gentleman that hath alwaies deserved the commendacion of as much valour and resolucion, as might befitt the quality of such a commander. The care of his charge especially at sea submitts to no man that ever you have imployed. His tractability unto all directions that do anie wise concerne youre affaires do so farre exceed many of those churlish commaunders, who conceive all things that you do pay for to be peculiar unto their disposure and themselves onlie created for the sole goode of the fleete they do commaunde, that for our partes wee shall be interested in the direcion of affaires, we should never desyr noe better, or other man than Captain Weddell to Commaund the fleete."

WEDDELL BECOMES AN INTERLOPER

However, this order of the directors, which, indeed was undeserved and ungrateful, in view of his past services, so angered Weddell that he decided to sail no more for them, and on his return to England resigned. Then, in company with Edward Knipe and Nathaniel Mounteney, two other disgusted servants, who had come home with him, he entered into negotiations with Bonnell and Kynaston, two London merchants, and Sir William Courteen, a very rich financier, to form the Courteen Company.

The good offices of Endymion Porter, the financial pilot-fish of Charles I, having been secured by a bribe of £1000, and another similar sum to Secretary Widebank, the King consented, on receiving £10,000 for himself, to grant a commission for a voyage to India and the Far East to the new company, although it was a flagrant infringement of the monopoly granted to the London Company by his predecessors, and confirmed

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by himself. The London Company protested most vigorously but without any effect, the King either shamefully lying or evading until the new company's fleet had sailed.

Just as indignant as their masters were the Council at Surat when they received the following letter from Weddell, then at the Comoro Islands:

"The employement of ourselves upon a new designe may cause some surprise; but let His Majesties pleasure, and the good tearmes wee receved in England, suffice to resolve you that all our intendments are just, faire, and honest. I have heard with regret of the scandalous procedinges of some Englishmen in the Redd Sea, and would gladly doe aniethinge in our power to address, or revenge those wrongs, for wee cannot forget to wish well to our ancient masters."

To this Methwold angrily replied:

"I cannot say you welcome, for you bringe ruine to the Honourable Company. You have cutt the last stringe of the Company's bow, probably to youre own prejudice, since the trade that rightly belongs to the Company can never be diverted to another until their charter is dissolved. I will never beleive that it coulde proceed from the King's justice and goodness that Captain Cobb should take all the shipps, and you shoulde have all the trade of India. There muste have beene some badded instruments that have done office in abusing his Majesty's favour, and lett them bee who they will; some day they must expect to give a sadde occompt."

The joint reply from Mounteney and Weddell is as blunt:

"If fines, and publique undeserved reproches, instead of remuneration for honest services, bee the East Indies Companies honoure, as nowadays it is, wee praie God keepe both you and us from suche indulgences. Nor have wee gone aboute in the least

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kinde as you tax us, to ruyne them. Itt were too inhumaine in us. But blame us not, nor brand us with the title of merceneries, if beeinge commanded upon honest and lawful designes, we have imbraced a better masters pay which wee beleive yourself would have done especiallie after suche unkinde (wee give itt no worse epithet) and unconscionable usage.

"Wee are not to bee taken with a few flashes, and peremptorye jeering manaces, nor led away with unneccesary verbal compilmentall phrases. Be assured that if ever you attempt the least underhand injury by your suppositious trickes, which indeed, wee fere nott you shall answer itt as to noe mercenary man. . . . The reste of your letter, as indeed all youre letters is in generall and particular, so patched and cobbeled with Cobb's pranckes with which you falsely charge mee. Butt every cocke will crowe on his own hill."

There is more equally vigorous correspondence, which we may omit, the foregoing being a fair sample.

In order to come to some arrangement with the Portuguese, Weddell went straight from the Comoros to Goa, where he stayed for some months. Though he was armed with a letter and a jewelled miniature from King Charles, the former commending him and the latter as an introduction, he failed to obtain anything satisfactory, so, in January sailed down the coast to Bhatkal, where he established a factory under Nathony Vernworthy, and three assistants, with a surgeon, a joiner, and a smith—all English. From thence he sailed to Acheen, where he set up another under Edward Knipe, and then continued his voyage to Macao.

WEDDELL GOES TO CHINA

The hostility and influence of the Portuguese prevented any trade at Macao, so he sailed for Canton, where he was so successful that he aroused the enmity

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of the Chinese merchants, who sent adrift some fire-ships against his vessels "withe the purpose to rune them; but they were discovered and prevented. Now began actes of hostility, Captain Weddell taking certain junks that rode herabouts, and withal tooke from the Chyneses a small fortification, whilst her merchantes and theire stockes were kept prisoners in Canton."

In the end matters were arranged, curiously enough, by the aid of the Portuguese, who desired to charter his ships, so "receaving the money for his goodes, he sould his *Anne* at Macao, and withe the *Dragon*, *Sunne*, and *Katherine*, having receved aborde the Portugall and their goodes to be landed at Cochyne, hee past the Straights of Malacca, where hee found the Dutches, who semed to oppose him, but were better advised, soe that, after some bravadoes they parted friends." After calling at Achin, where he found little doing, he landed the Portuguese at Cochin, and went on to Bhatkal, which he found deserted. Vernworthy and one of his assistants had died in April and been succeeded by John Fortune, with a Dutchman named Peter Vandam second in charge.

Some months later the Dutchman incited the natives to murder Fortune, the joiner, and the smith, and then, with the plunder of the factory, fled to Goa and turned Catholic. George Barton, the surgeon, escaped the slaughter, and lingered on alone until November, when he, too, died. Staying only long enough to erect tomb-stones to Vernworthy, Wye, and Barton, which still exist in good preservation, Weddell left this grave of lost hopes and went round to Masulipatam. To judge by a report sent home by Richard Clerk, the factor in charge there, Weddell must have done very well in China:

"They have been in China at a place called Canton and have made such a voyage that wee conceive English men have never done before, or were ever more richly

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laden with goodes. Yet they flow with gold and silver in abundant manner. They will not sell anie Chynese commoditties, but disburse redy coyne for all manner of charges. They are well manned, and complaine of no wants."

At Masulipatam the Dutch, under the impression that Weddell was about to set up a factory, instigated the native governor to forbid him to come up the river, a prohibition Weddell replied to by "sendinge upp three country boates well filled with men and munitions, who bestowed some 20 or 25 shott into the towne which killed three or foure Moores and fled away the remainder." This incident having made it impossible to do any business near Masulipatam, Weddell went round to Cannamore on the Malabar coast, to attempt to pick up some pepper, and, having succeeded, was about to leave when he heard of the plight of the crew of the *Comfort*, a small ship belonging to the London Company, which, whilst on its voyage from Masulipatam to Surat, had been taken by pirates off the Malabar coast. The account of the fight, which is the first recorded piracy of the natives on an English ship, is well worth recording.

"Wee, the *Comfort*, were chased from early morning of the 16th of November 1639, by nine frigatts of the Malabarrs. They kept their distance until noon, when it came a flat calm. Insomuch they perseved that our ship could not work anyway with her sayles, they handed theire own, and immediatly rew all together on board us, and lashed us fast, notwithstanding that wee placed every shott into them, and ruyned manyie of their people. Being lashed on board they entred theire men in abaundance, the which wee used all possible means to cleare, but finding them so resolutly bent, and incresing so rapidly and abundantly; I (Walter Clark) resolved to blow up our upper deck, and effected it with the losses of not one of oure people, yet some hurt, and divers of the Malabarrs slayne and maimed.

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"This seemed little or nothing to diminish, or quell their courage but wee still continued to repel the opposing enemy by murtheringe and wounding, each other, they being so resolut, that when wee fired upon them, but immediatly they would not step aside from the muzzell of our ordinance, but being fired, would heave in whole busket of water; insomuch in the conclusion wee were forsed to betake ourselves unto the gun deck, uppon which wee had but two peeces of ordinance. They cutting with axes the deck over oure head, and hearing the hellish noyse of such a multitude, wee thought how to send them to their great adorer, Belzebub; which was by fyring all our powder at one blast, as many of us as were left alive leaping into the sea yet intercepted some, by those develish helhounds.

"We bee here, prisoners 23 Englishmen, many maimed; foure only excepted, blacks 4, and Javaes: slayne English 5, Javas 3, Blacks 13. What ransome they putt upon us wee knowe nott, but they say we spoyled them to the valew of 40,000 famams, and have kild, or maimed 1400 men (a Portuguese account gives 1000). Captain Weddell who hath now beein informed of our sad plight, by an English renegade Henry Weygive hath releved us in some manner."

After some negotiation, Weddell agreed to pay 2200 reals of eight, conditional on the prisoners being sent to Bhatkal, which was done. Eventually they were handed over to President Methwold, who returned the ransom to Weddell. By this time seven more Englishmen had died of their wounds and hardships.

In March 1639 Weddell and Mounteney, with the *Dragon* and the *Katherine*, sailed for England. The last mention of them is in the following rather uncharitable letter from President Fremlyn, who had succeeded Methwold. "What is become of the Grand Captain, and the Feitor Mor (Cape merchant) Weddell and

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Mounteney we know not. Here they are not heard of, nor at St. Lawrence or the Islands (Comoros). If they have miscarryed in some comfortable strome in doubling the Cape, itt may save you a world of labor in dissolving their trade."

However, Courteen's Association lingered on until 1649, when it was finally dissolved, after having ruined Sir William himself and many others, and done infinite harm to the London Company. As for Weddell himself what fitter death could he have desired? Most probably it saved him much trouble and sorrow, and, above all, the spectacle of the ruin of the Association he had done so much to form and successfully handled during his lifetime.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE SEA-FIGHT IN THE STRAITS OF ORMUZ (1625)

THE CONTENDING FLEETS—THE FLEETS ENGAGE—THE HEAT OF THE FIGHT DESCRIBED—ON BOARD THE ENGLISH MEN-OF-WAR—THE FIGHT RESUMED—THE AFTERMATH

THE CONTENDING FLEETS

In the preceding chapter, Captain Weddell's share in the fierce sea fight off Ormuz was briefly described, but the foundation of British power in the Persian Gulf is worthy of a more detailed account and contemporary narrative than exist.

At daybreak on the 1st February 1625 the allied fleet of four Dutch, and four English armed merchantmen, then at anchor off Ormuz, weighed and bore down on the Portuguese fleet of eight great galleons and a swarm of frigates which the day before had arrived under the island of Larak, about twelve miles down the Straits.

Greatly enraged, and also alarmed at the threat to their mercantile supremacy caused by the defeat of their ships by Shilling at Jask, and by the taking of their greatest entrepôt at Ormuz by the Persians, aided by the English, the Portuguese Government had determined on a supreme effort to clear the seas of the English, and to recover Ormuz, thereby hoping to restore their trade and prestige.

For these purposes a war fleet of specially large and well armed and manned galleons had been sent out direct from Lisbon, which was supplemented by two

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more locally built at Goa and Cochin. Their orders were to blockade the Persian Gulf, to retake Ormuz, and especially to destroy the Dutch and English ships trading to and from Persia to Surat, and if successful therein, to extend their operations to the whole of the Eastern seas. The Dutch were included with the English, though they had taken no part at Ormuz, for they were equally if not more obnoxious. Hence they were compelled to join hands with the English against the common enemy, even though they were bitter commercial rivals.

Though the numbers of large vessels were equal, there was no other comparison between the fleets, for whereas the ships of the allies were but merchantmen armed according to the exigencies of the period, when every sail sighted was a potential enemy, and with crews only sufficient for their actual needs, the Portuguese ships were, as their name imported, purely war vessels, crammed with seamen and soldiers. Four of the galleons were from 800 to 900 tons, whilst the four largest were 1400, 1500, 1600, and 1700 tons respectively, the last being practically a floating battery of very heavy scantling, specially converted from a carack (large merchant ship) at Cochin, "only to make a barricado, and be a battery for the rest of the fleet.

"This ship was saker if not whole culverin proof in her lower works, and did us more damage than any three of their ships taken together" (Weddell). "Some prisoners saye that the crews numbered from 500 to 800 men in each ship including 200 English, Irish, Scotch, and Dutch runagadoes." This was an exaggeration, for the total number, according to a French account, was 2100. The "runagadoes" were probably men from the English regiments serving in the Spanish army, for, since the Elizabethan wars had ceased, to find military employment for Englishmen was impossible at home, so they sought service abroad with

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French, Dutch, Swedes, and Spanish. The Dutch maintained an English Brigade until 1661, and a Scottish one for over a hundred years longer.

The armament of the Portuguese vessels comprised 232 guns, all of heavier calibre than most of the cannon of the allies, with the result that they could outrange them and deliver a much heavier broadside. The English fleet was composed of the *James*, of 900 tons and 48 guns; the *Jonas*, of 700 tons and 46 guns; the *Eagle*, of 400 tons and 22 guns; and the *Spy*, a pinnace, under the same Phelps or Phillips, who had so distinguished himself at Ormuz, and on this voyage by taking a Portuguese ship of 250 tons with his tiny ship, and almost single-handed.

The Dutch vessels comprised the *Zuid Holland* and the *Bantam*, of 46 guns each, and the *Dort* and the *Wasp*, each of 24 guns. Their tonnage is not given, nor are the numbers of the crews of each vessel, but taking what appears to have been the average of about one man to every three tons, the total men in both fleets would amount to about 1500 or 1600. Here we might mention that in such actions it was usual for the one crew to serve a pair of guns, the seamen doing sponging, loading, and running out, etc., whilst the gunner and his mates laid and fired the guns. Having thus briefly given the necessary details, let us to the battle.

THE FLEETS ENGAGE

Soon after noon of the 31st January 1625 the Portuguese fleet of eight galleons arrived under the island of Larak, having eighty frigates in company to tow, or reinforce them. It may be mentioned again that frigates were small armed coasting vessels, fitted both for sails and oars, and carrying a crew of about twenty men, all natives. Their function was as described, and

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THE ISLAND OF ORMUZ (From an old engraving)

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they were an invariable accompaniment of Portuguese fleets in battles near the coast.

Immediately a consultation was held aboard the *James*, at which the Dutch promised to equal the English in fighting to the last, and "toe sticke soe close to eache other as the shertes upon our backes, wee promising the like unto them."

"February 1st. Richard Langford, mate of the *Royal James*, speaks: "About foure of the clocke in the morning we had Divine service redd with prayers to Almightie God for victory over oure enimies. Which, beeing ended; oure captaine, as alsoe Mr. Kerridge, called all oure menn on the halfe deacke, and drank to them, encourageinge alle of them to perform with alacrity and boldness that committed to theire charge.

"He solemnly protesting, for oure better encouradgement, that, if it pleased God wee overcame oure enimies, of the wiche hee made noe doubt, the pilladge tayken should be equally and without partiallity equally devided among all menn, share and share like without the least giving accompt therof toe anie mann breathing under the cope of Heaven. *Ipsum Nomen* the verie name of pilladge did soe animate oure menn, that at the very instant they severally promised to doe theire best enddayvours, come life, come death."

Sturdy rascals all! 'Twas no wonder that the "verie name of pilladge" so heartened them, for the merchant seamen of those days were mostly either past or potential pirates, at all times ready for plunder, lawful or otherwise.

Owing to the fact that on all other occasions their interests were conflicting, the commanders of the respective fleets decided to operate independently, each controlling a section of the engagement. But even this measure of co-operation was defeated by light winds or dead calms and cross currents, the result being that the action resolved into a series of independent combats,

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each ship taking what came in its way after the first contact.

The first to engage were the pinnaces attached to the English fleet, the *Spy*, *Scout*, and *Jude*, who being light sailors got in amongst the frigates, who, with the exception of one cut off by John Phillips in the *Spy*, declined action, and rowed out of danger. Having sunk his choice, Phillips tackled the nearest galleon, but being crippled by her guns, and losing a number of men was compelled to limp off. Owing to light and baffling winds the first shot was not fired until near upon eight in the morning, by the allied ships, the first to engage being Becker, Admiral of the Dutch, who tackled the Portugese Admiral in the 1700-ton galleon, closely followed by Weddell in the *James*, whose quarry was the Vice-Admiral.

THE HEAT OF THE FIGHT DESCRIBED

Towed by his boats, Weddell came into action "thundring forth suche a peal of ordnance that would seeme to have rent the skies in sunder. Then the fight began to wax most fearce hot, and cruell. The *Star* and the *Dort* next came up, the former tackling the Portuguese Rear Admiral repaying her shott, with East India proffit, three for one whilst the latter passed on to as pluckily tackle another galleon. Then came the *Jonas*, and the other ships each singling out a disengaged enemy, until by nine the whole were fully engaged."

About ten o'clock Becker, the Dutch Admiral, was killed by a cannon shot direct in the chest, whereupon his ship fell into confusion and withdrew from the contest, the *James*, which had lost its antagonist by the latter having drifted out of range, pressing forward to take her place, engaging, as the chronicle hath it, "borde and borde" (broadside to broadside). By this

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time all were hotly engaged and so continued until five in the evening, despite the calm which set in about ten o'clock for the English and Dutch put out their boats to tow or keep them in position. Again let Richard Monk, mate of the *James*, speak through the phonograph over the gulf of three centuries:

"Without anie wordes or parley of eyther we tanguled and mixed oure fleetes one with another ashooting pellmell one against the other. Oure ordinance went off licke musketes, the dromes beate, and our trumpeters soundinge, and the flying shoot tearinge eache others sayles and rigging, macking such a wherling noyse in the ayere, and our men couragiously cheringe oursellves with a hubbub, whisling, and stiringe in ther severall places, had not the least thoughte of feare, but laded and discharged there ordinances at the ennymie.

"Sometymes wee coulde perseve them endever to beare away and sometymes wee shoulde dissarne a maste fall by the board. These thinges did incurrage us, and macke us hollow, and sing oute for joye, that wee ware as merrie in the fighte, as if it had binne noe matter of consequent insomuch that sartane Portugalls wiche wee had formerly tacken, beinge then in cheanes, tould us wee foughte as if thought it had bine a May Day game, not dreding, nor regarding our lives on soe good a cawse."

Such a vivid bit of word painting requires no commendation. To us it seems wonderful that these rude mariners of three centuries past, could, despite their quaint phraseology and divers spellings, convey in so few words such a graphic word-picture of an old-time sea-fight.

Far scattered over an oily yellow sea, canopied by a cloud-flecked sky of bright blue, across which moves a sun of super molten brass, are scattered the squat black ships of the allies, "tanguled" with the towering yellow galleons of their enemy. Each has a rag or two

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of sail spread on foreyard or jibboom to advantage any breath of wind that may arise, whilst from jack-staff, main, or foretopmast heads and bowsprit end hang limply the orange, white and blue tricolour of the Dutch, or the simple Cross of St. George, and the flag on the first Union, both contrasting simply with the great multi-coloured standards of the Portuguese, messy with the embroidered arms of king or knightly commander.

ON BOARD THE ENGLISH MEN-OF-WAR

Away in the distance to the right lie the rocky shores of Ormuz, and to the left the island of Larak, amid whose friendly shoals lurk a myriad frigates alert to sally forth to tow a friend to safety or to fasten, shark-like, on one of the allies should she drift, dismasted and helpless, within safe reach. From the sides of the contending ships puff gustily murky bursts of flame-stabbed smoke heralding the dispatch of an iron messenger, maybe to crash thudding into hull or through bulwarks, to rend sails or carry away rigging, or, best of all, to send a topmast or mast crashing "by the bord," a feat greeted by "cheringe men, betinge of drums, and sounding of trumpets," and rewarded by a swingeing draught, for your seaman gunner of those days was a mighty man of the bowl.

As Jehanghir said of his English gunners, "The more they drank the better they shott." Here lies the *Dort*, dismasted and helpless, a prey to three galleons, like to founder her, until good Master Clevenger crawls up, towed by his boats, and opens such a blast of well-directed fire that two of "the scurvie Portugalls" turn tail and limp away at the heels of their jackal pack of frigates to Larak and shelter. Whereupon Master Clevenger, though "sturdillie greeted with manie shott, did repay the accompt in a manner far beyond theire

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expectacions," until she too crawls off, leaving him to see the *Dort* well on her way to Ormuz.

Next comes the *James*, Admiral of the English fleet, "borde and borde" with the Portuguese Admiral, to whom, despite the great disparity in size, she sticks like a bulldog to a mastiff. Loose flying ropes and great rents in her sails show where most of the Portuguese shot have got home, for as at the Armada, the enemy ships were so far above the English that when near the guns could not be sufficiently depressed. Still, white-splintered gashes in her side show where shots have found a billet, whilst a great rent in the bulwarks amidships, through which is visible an overthrown demi-culverin, testify to a broadside that has gone home.

Through the triced-up ports of the *James* grin the smoke-grimed muzzles of demi-culverins and saker on the gun-deck, and whole and demi-culverin on the upper decks. From them, ever and again, bellies a gust of scarlet smoke, bidding good luck to the iron globe hurtling across the galleon a short three hundred yards away. As the smoke drifts aside one may see a sun-tanned, bearded face peer through the port to announce the result with a joyful shout, or a sulphury oath of disappointment.

Beneath the quarter lie two boats, well manned with sweltering seamen void of all garments but a pair of tarry breeches and a broad, flapped felt hat, ready to tow her head to a required position should it be required. On the poop stands the Admiral, a brown-bearded man of about forty, clad, as was then the custom for battle for men of his rank, in the bravery of his best garments, consisting of a blue camlet coat with full skirts laced with silver and with white sleeves and falling collar of white linen tied with a red silken cord with loose ends. Yellow nankeen breeches caught with ribbons at the knee, yellow hose, broad-toed shoes, and a high-

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crowned, wide-brimmed hat bound with a silver-lace band complete the costume, whilst for arms he carries a short, broad-bladed, plain-hilted sword, and a pair of clumsy pistolets thrust in a broad silver-buckled waistbelt. Beside him stands President Kerridge, specially from Surat to see for himself how matters are progressing in the Gulf, a tall, spare, shrewd-looking man of about fifty, soberly clad in dark-hued garments of Calicut cloth.

At each gun sweat and strain a waist-naked, bare-footed gang of hairy-faced, burnt-brown seamen, their heads bound by smoke-blackened rags of once gaudy colours, and faces and bodies grimed with sweat-mingled smoke. Cursing and shouting amid the inferno of sweltering heat and sulphurous fumes, they toil incessantly at handspike, rammer, and sponge, only staying to snatch a draught of tepid water from the wooden bucket that stands between the guns with a half coco-nut shell floating to denote fresh water or a draught of rum from the leathern jack borne round by the steward.

To and from the gun-room scuttle nimble-footed powder monkeys, each with his covered bucket of cartridges, made up in cotton covers. Erstwhile gutter-snipes of London, or Plymouth or Deptford, dock-rats with wits sharpened by the struggle for life as soon as they could toddle, they are a sore trial to the godly chaplain, for only a rope's end can get them to prayers or teaching, and they can belch out the blackest and curliest of sea-oaths with the worst of the mariners, some of whom take an unholy delight in cultivating a too-willing soil.

One can watch the young scamps as they scamper along joining in the hubbub that greets a successful shot, though ever wary for the cuff which most of the seamen consider it a duty to administer on the off-chance of its being well deserved, if not now, sooner or later.

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Here is an imp sneaking quietly up to the black jack of rum the steward has set down whilst he watches the enemy. He may be successful in snatching the forbidden draught, but equally he may not observe the hovering mate, who breaks the draught half-way down, to send the urchin spluttering to a safe distance, therefrom to deliver, boy-like, a volley of tearful abuse at his tormentor.

Here and there lie grim evidences of battle. Beneath a tarpaulin lie three silent forms awaiting the last kind offices of sailmaker and chaplain, whilst beside the mast-foot kneels Padre Lord, administering the prayers for the dying to a poor wretch who, with both legs torn off, lies gasping out last words of prayer and remembrance to those he leaves behind. Darkly crimson splashes on the tar-seamed planks tell of others borne below to the surgeon in the orlop deck. Even as we watch the surgeon's mate appears at the hatchway and beckons to the minister, who, laying down his now silent friend, hastens below to speed the passing soul.

Between four and five the Dutch bore away with the land breeze to repair damages, whereupon the English, perforce, did the same and the battle ended for the day. The next day both sides spent in repairing damages, the enemy having suffered worst, especially the Rear-Admiral, who lost her maintopmast, her foretopmast, and part of her mainmast, which left her practically a floating hulk, though otherwise most useful on account of her guns, which outranged the allies. On the 3rd the action was resumed. Richard Monk again testifies:

THE FIGHT RESUMED

"February 23rd 1625. Wee waied anker at four in the morning, and at six began another fighte, whiche proved far more feirce and terrible than the first,

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because nowe wee had a fine gale of wind, wherby we could easily worke oure shipps, and a smooth sea, whereby wee colde easily both levell and plie oure ordinance. Oure shipp fell afirlye upon the admerall, the *Jonas* an the reste uppon others. Thus wee fell toe it againe dischargine our ordinance as fast as wee could laied, and worke them, and trim our sayles havinge the goode gale of wind wee wanted.

"Sometymes wee would have three or foure uppon us at a tyme whiche wee coulde passe through withe littel harm giving broadside after broadside, and wer not ansered above one in tenn oure shipp was often boarde and boarde, yet wee coulde nott perseve a man stirringe. In this brunte or skirmish wee raked often tearinge theire rigging an sayles and batteringe them extremely, the enimie shoting a shott as long as we were nere himm, but falling off, and coming on, and then haveinge better ordinance than wee (heavier guns) made their advantage, and did us all the harm wee receved at length; Soe thatt, wee doe conseve thatt, when wee were neere them, they stowed themselves awaye."

"In this interim our prize, wiche was fitted for a fir shipp beeing a nad goer was a pritty distance from the fleete; Soe seeinge her thus severed oure enimie sent his frigatts, beeinge fourteen well appoynted to sett uppon her intendinge to cutt her off from the reste of the fleet who were hot and ferse in the fught with the galleons. Mr. Darby the master of her, persevinge off the frigatts to make towrds her, and knowing it unposibell to resiste them, or toe accomplis his assign, cawsed his men presently toe putt themsellves with himselfe into the barge, and soe gave fier unto the trayne, and soe outraun the friggats, and cam aborde our shipe withe safetie, levinge the prize all a blazing fier, and soe that the friggatts durst nott com nere the vessel.

"The fighte continewed as bludy as it was at the first oure shippe beeinge imployed uppon one shippe

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or another all the tyme. It cannot bee that we but killed them manie menn. The durance of the fighte was suche a thinge as it was thought to bee one of the gretest ever foughte, the sea beeinge all as callme an smoothe as the Themes, and wee continuallie bord and bord. About foure the *Jonas* and the Dutch admerall fell upon a galleon that hadde become separated from the reste and pitifully tore and rent her. But about six of the clock the men beeinge verie werie, and the enemie havinge fled to Larak towed bye ther friggats the fighte was given over for the tyme beeinge."

THE AFTERMATH

The Portuguese fleet remained under the lee of Larak until the next ten days, repairing their damages in safety, for, the coast being rocky and interspersed with shoals all unknown to the allies, it was too dangerous to approach, even within gun-fire, so they returned to Gombroon, leaving their pinnaces to keep an eye on the movements of the enemy, who, within ten days, were again ready for sea, having repaired their damages and got up new topmasts.

The recuperative powers of these old wooden vessels were remarkable, especially as shell was still unknown, and the damage done by the small, solid cannon-shot more local than general, and so easily repaired. Each ship carried spare topmasts and other spars, spare sails and cordage, and a complete set of carpenters and sailmakers, quite capable of carrying out the necessary repairs, aided by the seamen, all of whom were handy with tools or at temporary expedients to render their ship seaworthy. Nothing was more common than for the crew of a vessel shipwrecked on an island or a savage coast to set to work, and build a small vessel of sorts from the wreck or local materials and sail off to safety, or otherwise.

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When men with such heterogeneous material, and under such difficult circumstances, could do such marvellous work, it was not at all difficult for war-vessels having all materials and facilities at hand to get made seaworthy and fit for battle in a short time. This explains why the Portuguese fleet, so badly mauled in the different actions with the English, was again at sea, almost as powerful as ever within a short time.

Such was the case on this occasion, for ten days later the whole of the Portuguese fleet was seaworthy enough to make a dash for Muskat to complete their repairs and replenish their ammunition. On the 13th February they put out to sea just a few hours before the allies, giving up the hope of again bringing them to action, left for Surat. On sighting the enemy far ahead every effort was made to overhaul them, but, being delayed by some junks they were escorting, it was four in the afternoon before the Portuguese were brought to a running fight.

The first to come up with the enemy was the *James*, who singled out her old antagonist, the Portuguese Admiral. Then came the *Jonas* and three Dutchmen, all of whom entered into a running fight with the Portuguese, which continued until darkness enabled the enemy to make their escape. William Minors, master's mate of the *Eagle*, a vessel whose master was afterwards reprimanded for slackness in the first two days' fighting, narrates that "the fighte continewed verie hot on bouth sides untell darcke nighte, and then wee leafte them all tattered and towerne, macking our accounte, the next morning to have the other od bought with them. But in the nighte they altred their course and stoode awaye to Muscate; soe wee on our course for India."

What strikes one as curious in this action is the fact that the Portuguese made no attempts to use their fighting-tops, for which they apparently had soldiers

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in plenty. Had they done so they might easily have picked off the English gunners on the upper decks, for, on many occasions, the contending vessels were within musket-shot. That the allies did not do so was due to want of men, for they were manned strictly as trading ships; their men being after all but amateur gunners and musketeers.

The only blot upon this fine series of actions was the conduct of the *Eagle* of the English fleet and of the *Wasp* of the Dutch, both of whom kept out of close action on the first two days of the fight. Indeed, but for his death soon after, Johnson, the master of the *Eagle*, would have been severely dealt with for what his own mate, Minors, called "contempte or cowardice which aere the two basest ornaments in warr."

The casualties of the English during the three days' fighting were: the *James*, 13; the *Jonas*, 11; the *Star*, 4; and the *Eagle*, 1, all killed; "29 being slayne outrighte besydes many dismembered (wounded), and the Dutch 43, includinge theire admiral Becker, whose losse was much lamented by Dutch, and Englesh in respecte thatt hee hadde shewn himselfe soe valient and mayntayned the fighte withe as much resolucion as mighte bee."

As with most of the remainder of the casualties, Becker was killed by a direct hit from a cannon ball, a fact that accounts for the unusually small number of wounded as compared to the killed, which, according to a Dutch account, numbered only twenty in both fleets. Most of these were "dismembered," as Minors remarks, this meaning that they lost limbs from direct hits, a few only being wounded by splinters, or injured by the bursting of over-heated guns.

According to the account given by a Frenchman who served in the Portuguese fleet in these actions, their casualties were 451 killed, including the Admiral and the Vice-Admiral. This, however, is contradicted

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by information obtained by the Dutch from Goa direct, which gave the killed at 350, including the Vice-Admiral, his nephew, and three captains, and, further, that they landed about 400 wounded men at Muskat.

An interesting detail concerns the number of shots fired by the allies, which amounted to 11,000 in the combined fleets. Of these the *James* alone accounted for 2200, and so damaged were her decks by the continued firing that the men on the middle-deck were in fear that the guns from the main orlop and the upper decks would fall through upon them. In the second day's fight she was struck by 400 shot, most of which struck the upper works and the rigging, though 20 hulled her so near wind and water that they had to be plugged by her boats during the action. So low were both fleets reduced for ammunition that at the end of the third day's fight they had only twenty barrels of powder and 600 cannon-shot left.

If the butcher's bill be taken as a comparison, this fight of armed merchantmen compares horribly with many regular naval actions of later years, and especially with Indian land battles, which, though borne on standards, were fought at exceedingly small loss as compared to this long-forgotten battle.

The later history of Weddell, who so valiantly commanded the English fleet, has already been given, but the following extract from his log contains a very human note, too delightful to omit, concerning a catastrophe that occurred on the voyage to Surat:

"March 1st 1625. This day being Shrove Tuesday, wee hadde noe pancakes by reson itt was tayken for the 29th February and consequently mayde two Leape yeares together, viz. anno 1624 and 1625, a pestilent computation which overspread the whole of the fleet."

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CHAPTER IX

THE GALLANT DEFENCE OF THE *LION* AND THE BOMBARDMENT OF BOMBAY (1626)

THE first mention of Bombay in the annals of the merchant venturers occurs on the 28th October 1625 to the effect that: "On the 5th of September last four great galliounes of Portugall arrived off the barre of Daman, of whom, at their first landfall one was cast away at Sanjan. The rest, seekinge harbour repayred to Bombayee, a hole (harbour) between Bassein and Chaule wherat another was cast away when enteringe the Barre, the others went safely in to whom shortly came two other galliounes and a shipp all of one company sent forth from Muscat to waylay our shipps from England on their arrivall at this coast."

It was an attack by these ships on the outcoming fleet that brought forth the gallant defence of the *Lion*, one of the most heroic of the many gallant deeds of the merchant mariners in the service of the East India Company, and in this connection it is necessary to explain how it came about that only some six months after their defeat in the Straits of Ormuz, the Portuguese were again at sea, almost as strong as ever. Though the Portuguese had been badly beaten off Jask, at Ormuz itself, and in Weddell's battle in the Straits of Ormuz, their fleet had not been destroyed but only crippled for the time being.

The hulls of the galleons were very thick, and as the shot fired against them was all solid, the damage

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to the hulls was local, and, if not too close to the water and the weather fairly good, not dangerous and easily stopped. Therefore the damage to the defeated vessels was mostly confined to the upper works and the masts, sails, and rigging, with the result that, if the ship could escape and limp away to harbour, she was repairable, and in a few months could be again at sea and as strong as ever.

After the defeat off Ormuz the Portuguese had sought shelter at Muscat, where they had repaired and refitted, and within three months were again dominant in the Gulf. From thence they gradually made their way to the coasts of India, and, in seeking shelter from the tail of the monsoon, met with the disasters mentioned. We continue from the records: "The small shipp mencioned cominge ashore in theire port was also mayde unserviceable, butt, the remaynder of the galliounes aforemencioned, under command of Nunez Alores Botelho, beeinge it seemes, the best of the fleet, this 4th of the moneth arrived at Swally with semblance to enter the porte where both oure shipps and the Dutch were prepared for theire recepcion.

"Butt, presentlie his dissembled purpose Botelho sett sayle early on the 7th with winde and tyde, to make his way to Daman. Wee, supposinge the approach of oure shipps from England had induced this so sodaine departure endevowred to perswade the Dutch to join with us in pursuite, which they, alleadging was butt done to drawe us forth to meet greter forces; utterly refused." The attitude of the Dutch was perhaps excusable, in view of the fact that Botelho had sent in a challenge to the fleets, either or both, to meet him at sea for a contest; one he was hardly likely to do unless he had something up his sleeve in view of his several defeats. However, he had not.

To continue: "Twoe dayes after wee had certayne intelligence of three shipps eyther Dutch, or English

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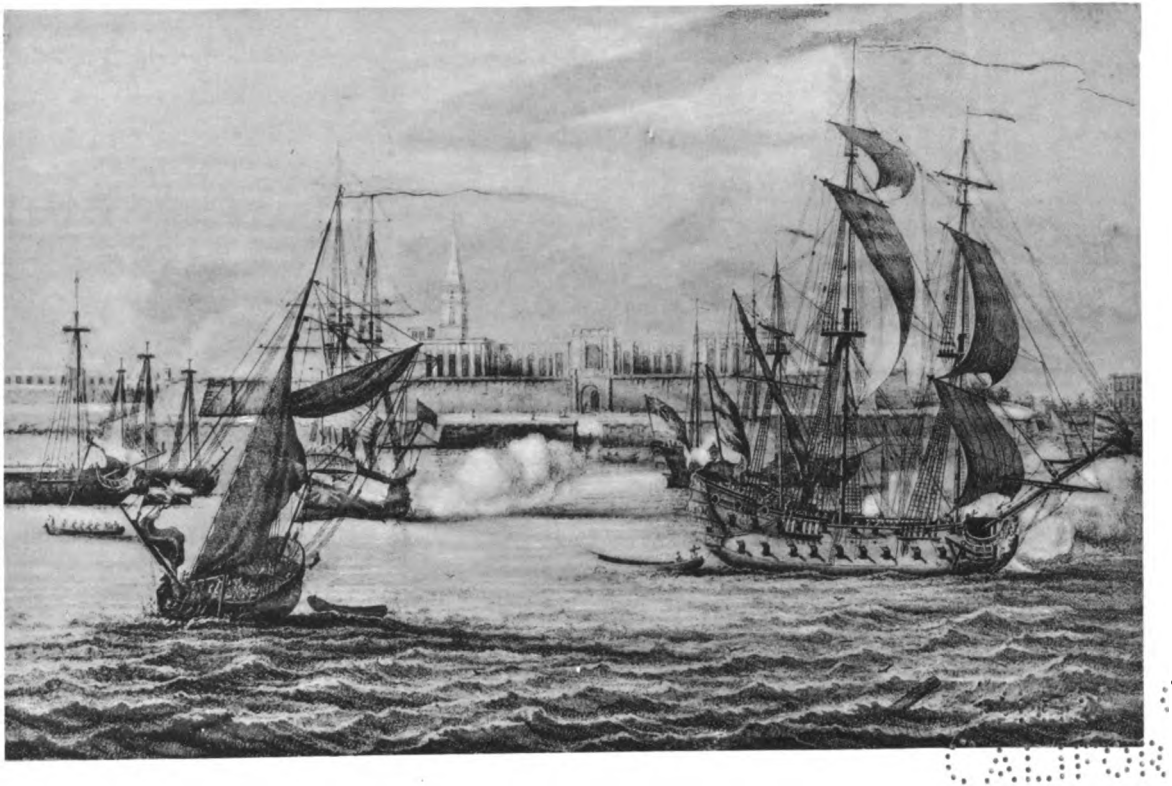

FORT WILLIAM AT BENGALL

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OF CALIFORNIA

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ankored nere Gundavee, and that the four galliounes had encountered them, which being conformed by sundry other advices, the Duch. when too late were induced to accompany us, and all five shipps set out in pursuit, butt to late the Portugalls whom report sayeth were much tattered and torne having gotten againe into Bombayee Hole."

What had actually happened was this. The approach of the outcoming fleet under Blyth, consisting of the *Palsgrave* (1000 tons), the *Lion* (600 tons), and the *Dolphin* (500 tons), had been notified to Botelho by one of his fast sailing scouts and he had gone to meet them. There had originally been another ship, the *Falcon*, and two pinnaces, but these had outsailed the heavier ships and slipped by the Portuguese during the night, both unaware of the other.

Immediately on sighting the Portuguese galleons a consultation was hurriedly held, at which it was decided that as the English stood small chance against the four galleons, ranging from 1500 to 900 tons, the only chance was a running fight to Gombroon, which was nearer than Surat. For two days the fight continued, the *Palsgrave* and the *Dolphin* at length outsailing their slower consort the *Lion*, which was left by the other Portuguese to Ruy Friere himself.

Ranging alongside, the galleon grappled and made fast to the *Lion*. Then a swarm of men boarded, with the result that, after a stiff fight in which Richard Swanley, her master, the gunner, one of the mates, and a number of men were killed the survivors were driven into their closed quarters. Here they held out until dusk, though some sixty of the Portuguese were in possession of the poop and forecastle decks, to which they were kept by the fire of the besieged in the closed quarters, commanding the waist.

At dusk, finding themselves abandoned by their consorts and free from all but the galleon grappled to

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them, a consultation was held by the survivors, who resolved rather than chance being taken prisoner to Goa and subjected to the tender mercies of the Inquisition, to blow up the ship and the besiegers on deck with it. This resolved, powder was brought up from the hold and gun-room, to which access was easy by means of the lower decks, and some twenty barrels placed immediately under the poop.

As they were about to fire the train it occurred to Henry Crosby, now commanding the ship, that if the anchor of the *Lion* was suddenly dropped, and the vessel brought up, the resulting jerk would break the grappling ropes and free her from the galleon. So it happened. The ropes gave way and the galleon drifted away into the darkness leaving fifty or sixty of her boarders marooned on the poop and forecastle-head of the *Lion*.

Retreating to the lower decks the survivors fired the train, and a moment later the Portuguese on the poop were blown into the sea, soon to be followed by those on the forecastle who were slaughtered, and their bodies cast overboard. When day broke no sign of the enemy was visible, so, hoisting sail on the undamaged masts the *Lion* made for Gombroon, where she arrived in safety. The other vessels having been drawn off by the *Palsgrave* and the *Dolphin* did not stop short of the Comoros, where they waited until the arrival of the winter fleet. Incidentally, the Richard Swanley killed in the defence of the *Lion* was not the same man who had served with Weddell at Ormuz, but a cousin.

Furious at the loss of the English ships which had outsailed him, Botelho returned to Gombroon with a single vessel and a number of frigates to make sure of the *Lion* at least. Had the latter remained in harbour she would have been safe, but, fearing that she might be cut out by the frigates, it was decided to send her to Ormuz, where she could shelter under the walls of

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the castle, in which some guns still remained. It was an unfortunate decision, for whilst on her way there the *Lion* was set upon "and utterly destroyed by the force of 20 frigott and some boats which boarded her within smale shoot of the castle soe plyeinge their fireworks that within a howres tyme she was burnt to the water and all her men slayne or lost eyther by fire or water."

By the time the news of the destruction of the *Lion* and the massacre of her crew had reached Surat the Dutch and English ships thereat had increased to a total of twelve equally divided, with which it was decided to attack the three galleons, who had again put in to Bombay to re-fit, and, on the 8th October 1626, the combined fleet sailed, picking up on the way and adding to their fleet two more Dutch ships bound from Batavia to Surat.

As usual there are several accounts of this expedition, for the Company insisted on the captain, the mate, or some other officer, and a merchant, each keeping a separate diary of the voyages or expeditions, the idea being that each was a check on the other. Unfortunately for the attacking fleet, the galleons had left some time before for Goa, with the result that the expedition, were it not for the fact that it caused the first visit of the English to Bombay, would not be worth chronicling. However, here it follows.

Joseph Vian, master of the *Discovery*, writes:

"October 11th 1626. Ankered in the offinge off Bombayee, wee thinkinge thayt our enimye the Portingall had (was) bin there but hee was not theare with anie shipps. The next daie wee and the whole fleete, both of English and Duch went into Bumbay and came to an anckor in 9 fatham in the entringe of the harbor. On the 14th wee went in with the whole fleete in farder, nere a small town, or village where there were Portugalls, and ankered and rode a mile off in six

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fadam one point per compasse beareinge W.S.W. 5 mile off, the other S. & by W. some 5 leagues off.

"Wee came soe neere the town with two of oure shipps that wee drove them all awaie withe oure grate ordinance, viz. the *Morrice* of the English, and the *Mauritius* of the Duch. In safetie wee landed our menn on shoare whoe pilladged the towne, and set all their houses on fire, with their fort neere the waters edage. Yea, wee staid there until the 15th daie, doeinge all the spoyle that possoblie wee coulde; but got nothing to speake of but victaul. Soe, when wee had done all the harme wee coulde, the 15th daie in the evening, wee got all our menn aboord, leavinge the towne on fire.

"And the 16th daie in the morninge when the winde cam off shore wee wayed anker, and went off to sea againe plieinge itt for Suratt, seeinge wee colde nott meete with the Portingall shipps, for wee came purposlie to meete them, and did seeke them."

Another account, by David Davis, who has left on record the very first English sketch map of Bombay harbour, runs:

"After consultacion held aboard the *William* wee waied and sayled into the going of the Bay to see yf the Portingalls weare ther. And the commanders sent their shallups to chase fisher boats thatt were in the offing wherof they tooke two. On the 13th wee went onto the baye, and rode without the stakes, as you maye see in the draft following. On the 14th the *Morris* and two Dutch shipps went in neere to the great howse to batter itt, in which batterie two of the *Morris* ordnance splitt.

"The same daie wee landed 300 menn Englishe and Dutch, and tooke the greate howse with two bases (cannon of one-inch bore) of brasse, and one fawkon of iron. October 15th. All oure menn embarkqued aboorde the Shipps, being Sunday in the evening, and left the grete howse, which was both a friery, a warehowse and a fort all afire burninge with manie other

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howses, together with two new frigatts not yet from the stocks, nor fully ended. But they had carried away all ther tresur, and alle thinges of anny valleww before oure menn landed, alle having runde awaie."

Before we forget it we must remark on the wonderful independence of both merchants and mariners in the matter of spelling. Each pleased himself, and often enough the same man spelt the same word in several different ways in a single short letter or account. But what boots it? They expressed what they meant clearly enough and very often in most picturesque language.

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CHAPTER X

THE ASTOUNDING APPEARANCE OF ENGLISH PIRATES (1632–1637)

CONCERNING PIRACIES—THE VENTURE OF THE *SEAHORSE* (QUAIL)—THE PIRACIES OF AYRES AND COBB—ESCAPE OF THE PIRATES TO ENGLAND—THE PIRACIES ATTRIBUTED TO THE COMPANY

CONCERNING PIRACIES

GENUINE piracy, lawless and ruthless, is entirely distinct from the rough and tumble, and too often questionable doings of the adventurers, but comes on the scene in their wake.

Almost from the first entry of ships of the Northern European nations into Asiatic seas at the opening decades of the seventeenth century, commenced piracy of Asiatic vessels, occasionally by the ships of the different companies under each other's flags, but more often by vessels belonging to persons outside these corporations. So safe and lucrative was this nefarious industry that even kings and cardinals did not disdain to take a hand in what Howel Davis, a notorious pirate, called "the great game."

As early as February 1618 we find Sir Thomas Roe, then at Agra, commenting on the difficulties that had arisen to his mission, owing to the depredations of French, Danish, and English pirates in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. He especially mentions two vessels sent out by Sir Robert Rich and Philip Bernhardi, both merchants of London, remarking that "iff measures bee nott tayken to prevent such expeditions, wee shall have the seas full of them and alle trayde ruyned."

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However, both vessels were taken by the Company's ships before they did any harm, and escorted past the Cape. A complaint laid against them was dismissed by King Charles on the ground that they had done no damage or that none had been proved against them.

A year later we find mention of French and Danish pirates in these waters, coupled with the report that several country ships were missing, which indicates that the pirates ensured secrecy and safety by depositing what they had no use for in the safe deposit of "Davy Jones's Locker," the most inviolate of all. The French, having no company established in India to keep an eye on the movements of interlopers, or whose interests required caution, were the most daring of all, or, maybe, more open in their operations, for they figure quite frequently as pirates during the first half of the seventeenth century.

For instance, in the year 1632, we find a report sent out to the Surat factory that a "shipp of Dieppe hath bin in the Redd sea, and returned with a booty of £30,000," and the very next year one from St. Malo returned with £40,000. Following these are several other mentions of successful pirate cruises, not the least being the two vessels sent out in 1642 by Cardinal Richelieu. But most extraordinary was the fact that a reigning monarch having subjects engaged in trade with the very nations proposed to plunder should not only countenance such nefarious enterprises, but actually send out his ships on them!

THE VENTURE OF THE *SEAHORSE* (QUAIL)

Such was the case with the *Seahorse*, a tiny ship of one hundred tons only, which, in March 1630, left Plymouth with a roving commission authorising her "to range the seas the world over for the purpose of taking prizes," with instructions annexed thereto "to

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goe for the Redd Sea and there to make purchase (prize) of anie hee could meete thatt were not frends or allyes unto his Majestie." Why the King should have sent out such a ridiculously small vessel for such a risky voyage is hard to fathom, unless he thought that the smaller the ship the lesser the crime, or that her loss, if incurred, was not great, is not obvious.

As usual the whole proceeding was conducted in an atmosphere of secrecy and lying, for the vessel had been fitted out and dispatched without its aim leaking out, and even when she was met off the Cape Verdes by a Company's ship, whom she informed of her destination and object, all knowledge of it was denied by the King's Treasurer. She was met in St. Augustine's Bay by Slade's outward-bound fleet, the commander of which was minded to arrest him until "Haveinge seen his commission, and the force of and alsoe the examinacion of severall of his people whome wee detayned prisoners, soe, finding that hee had done nothing contrarie to his comission, it was thought best to relese himm after wee hadd detayned him prisoner for two daies."

The next heard of the *Seahorse* is in a Dutch letter from Surat which mentions that: "Here is arrived a smaleshipp which is called the King of Englands shipp. Her captaine who hath a strong commition hath bin in the Redd Sea, and from thence brought no small store of ducketts (ducats). He carryes the Kinges flagg in despighte of the other Englyshe ships in the road, and they may not weare anie other than the redd crosse on a whyte flag."

The latter allusion is to the fact that by an order cancelling that of 1605, the Union flag became a royal prerogative. Certainly the English factors denied that Quail had made a considerable booty, but being fearful of compensation claims on their employers, they would naturally minimise his depredations. From Surat,

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where, by virtue of his commission, Quail obtained stores and munitions, he returned to the Red Sea, where he ransacked six junks, from which he "tooke ryce, opium, silke stuffes, gold and bullone," by which it would appear that Quail took the cream of the cargoes, which, considering the size of his craft, was all that he could do.

The last letter, which also states that Quail humorously gave his name as Robin Good Fellow, signed on passes to his victims, also mentions that he was now on his way to Mayotta, there to careen and re-fit before going home. At Mayotta he encountered the *Jonas* outward bound, from whom he again requisitioned stores and assistance, paying for both with notes on the Lord Treasurer, which, by the way, were never honoured. By this time his crew was greatly depleted, no less than twenty-seven men having died at various places and Quail himself died at Mayotta.

The command was now taken by his mate, who took the ship first to the West Indies and then home. The reason for this curious deviation seems to have been to get rid of any incriminating cargo too valuable to jettison, so enabling the vessel to point to an empty hold as proof of innocence. She arrived at Plymouth in July 1633, having been over three years absent, during which she had collected much valuable booty. Though Sir William Foster doubts that much profit accrued from the enterprise, the Court Minutes quote a rumour that the profits were some £20,000, which may be credited, especially as a letter from George Willoughby at Surat states that the *Seahorse* was richly laden on arrival at Mayotta, and hints that Captains Weddell and White were squared to assist him with a share of the plunder. The only damage sustained by the Company was £100 for provisions Quail had taken from a Surat junk bearing their pass. No action for recovery was ever taken, but the bills, dishonoured by

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the Treasury, were charged to the accounts of the masters who supplied the goods and assistance!

THE PIRACIES OF AYRES AND COBB

The next piratical enterprise sent out from England was by two young London merchants, Bonnell and Kynaston, who were probably stimulated by the success of the cruise of the *Seahorse*, though they alleged that, considering how the Barbary corsairs preyed on European commerce and the number of Christians held captive by them, reprisals on Mussulmans were their justifiable object. As nothing but hard fighting was to be expected from the Barbary pirates, and the experiences of the *Seahorse* showed how easily Asiatic ships in the Eastern seas could be plundered, and the profits to be expected from them, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf were selected as the cruising grounds.

It was also noted that the royal patronage and flag had been most useful to Quail who, but for its protection, would have had short shrift instead of countenance and assistance. Accordingly, Endymion Porter, a courtier who acted as an intermediary in all shady transactions promising pecuniary profit to the King, was approached and the necessary sanction obtained in return for a liberal share of the anticipated profits. But, as with the *Seahorse*, the initial proceedings were veiled by duplicity and even downright lying on the part of the Court, for two separate commissions—the one public and the other to be opened at the Cape Verdes—were issued.

The first was issued to Richard Oldfield, master of the *Samaritan* (250 tons), with which was associated the *Roebuck* (100 tons) under William Ayres. The complement of the *Samaritan* was twenty guns and seventy-eight men, that of the *Roebuck* being thirty-two men and ten guns. The commission issued to Oldfield

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bore the date 25th January 1636, was for a voyage of discovery only, authorising him "to range and discover along the coasts of America from Virginia to Cape Florida and to explore any other coasts of America and its rivers," thus making the cruise seem not only harmless but laudable.

The second superseded Oldfield in favour of William Cobb, his mate, who now became commander of the expedition, Oldfield being retained in the *Samaritan*, and Ayres, with whom was associated a truculent Welshman named David Jones as mate, master of the *Roebuck*. Incidentally, it has been surmised that the term "Davy Jones's Locker" owes its origin to this individual, at whose instigation, it was averred, several plundered ships were placed therein, with crews complete. It may be so, but it is generally held that this nickname for the bottom of the sea is a much older one.

The commission issued to Cobb, dated the 27th of February, ran: "We, etc., etc., doe hereby aouthorize our well beloved subject William Cobb with his two shipps, the *Samaritan* and the *Roebucke* toe range the seas the wourld allover especiallie from the Cape of Goode Hope to Chyna and Jappon, including the Redd Sea the Persian Gulf and the Coromandel Coast, and toe mayke prize of alle such the tresures, merchandizes, goodes, and commodities which toe his beste abillities hee shall be able to tayke, of infidells or of anie other persons, princes, potentat, or state nott in league, or amitie with us beyond the line equinoctiall, not withstanding our former commition granted to our lyall subject Richard Oldfield master of the said ship *Samaritan*, bearing the date the 25th of this month."

To cut the long-winded document short, it further authorises Oldfield to succeed Cobb in the event of the death of the latter, and to act strictly under the instructions of Endymion Porter, Thomas Kynaston and Samuel Bonnell, to whom an account of all captures,

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etc., is to be rendered, and who will be responsible for the wages of the crews and the division of prize money, etc. Both vessels shall wear the colours appointed for the Royal Navy. All neighbouring princes and allies are entreated, and all English subjects commanded, to assist Cobb with anything he may desire. In addition, special letters were addressed to all persons in authority in the East Indies and to Captain Weddell of the Courteen Company to assist with men, munitions, and provisions.

The words, "beneath the equinoctial line" indicate the peculiar conditions of those days, when the peace of nations did not run beneath that boundary, Dutch, English, and Portuguese traders continually fighting each other, even though their respective nations were at peace in Europe. Having secured the ships, which, like the *Seahorse*, were small by reason of their being less costly to fit out and maintain and more likely to escape observation, whilst big enough for the job, the next important item was the crew, and the purlieus of Wapping, Limehouse, Stepney and Deptford were scoured for likely ruffians, to whom safety of life and limb was of less importance than illegal gain to spend on strong drink and the venal caresses of Moll of Wapping and the other frail sisterhood of Tiger Bay.

We may imagine the secret conferences between the truculent David Jones and likely recruits in the pothouses over brimming blackjacks of beer, as bit by bit he extracted from them their claims to enrolment, some recounting incidents which, if betrayed to the Admiralty, would have resulted in an undesired elevation to an airy and exalted position on the Essex marshes encased in a coat of tar and adorned with *bijouterie de fer* of a massive nature. As in those days and for near a hundred years later, the boundary line between merchant seaman and pirate was only a matter of opportunity.

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In most cases the only difficulty was selection of the most sturdy and truculent of those offering. Even then more than half never returned, the *Samaritan* alone losing fifty men on Mohilla from shipwreck, exposure, and disease.

The secret was so well kept that both ships got away in April 1635 without the Company having the slightest knowledge of their destination or intentions; nor, indeed, had Oldfield until the sealed orders were opened at the Cape Verdes. So chagrined was he at the discovery of the double dealing and his supersession that he, it was said, never recovered from the shock, which, added to the loss of his ship, caused his death. Judging by internal evidence and the evidence of Ayres, the leading spirit in the subsequent piracies was David Jones, on whom the blame for the robbing, torturing, and other outrages to follow was laid.

When rounding the Cape the vessels were blown apart in a storm during which the *Roebuck* was carried so far past Madagascar that she decided to go straight on to the Red Sea, where a rendezvous near Cape Guardafui had been arranged, should they become separated after leaving Mohilla, where it had been intended to re-fit. Having lost sight of her consort, the *Samaritan* carried out the original intention of making for the Comoros, but still meeting bad weather, was wrecked on Mohilla some time in July. The greater part of the crew got ashore safely, and, in the fashion of those days, when self-aid was usually the only one available, set to work to build a pinnace of about forty tons from the wreck of their ship, from which they salvaged most of the stores and guns.

But the exposure to almost incessant rain, and the hard work of salvaging and building played havoc, about fifty men, amongst whom was Oldfield, dying at Mohilla. Meanwhile, ignorant of the fate of her consort, the little *Roebuck* had gone on to Ras Filuk and

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there waited for her arrival or orders. After some time, grown tired of waiting, Ayres, at the instigation of Jones and others of the crew (he said) sailed in search of prey. On the 5th September 1636 they encountered near the Ghutkin Islets on the Arabian coast, a junk named the *Taufiqi* of Surat, homeward bound from Aden with passengers and cargo. What now transpired will be told by her master, Naukhada Nur-uddin:

"Aboute evening wee saw a smale shipp which drew neare and fired uppon us. Wee cryed oute that wee belonged to Surat, and had a pass, but the smale shipp still continued to fire, so thinkinge wee had to do with Turkish or Portugall pirates we began to plye oure own ordinance. We fought thatt whole night, soe that divers of oure people were slayne. And nowe it begann to bee two houres of day, whenn wee all thoughte and resolved to die; atte wiche tyme Cojah Abull Hosun bidde us bee of goode cheare and take courage, and yf God were so pleased to dye resolutely.

"Oure enemies seeinge they coulde gaine nothing by fightinge; they putt oute an English flagg, and called oute to us, sayinge wee are English. As soone as wee sawe that they were English wee were exceedingly joyed, and purposed to send our passe unto them which accordingly wee did."

The pass herein mentioned was one issued to the vessels trading from Surat and guaranteed immunity from interference by the Company's vessels. Similar passes were issued by the Dutch and Portuguese to vessels belonging to ports where they had establishments, or which, as in the case of the Dutch and Portuguese, belonged to them.

The pass, having been gravely scrutinised by the master, was, as might be expected, found out of order, and the *Taufiqi* made lawful prize. The next day a junk, named the *Mahmudi* from Diu, was made prize without any fighting, so, having enough on his hands,

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the master of the *Roebuck* made for Ras Filuk, with the double purpose of meeting his consort should she have arrived, and of being able to land the passengers and crew of the two prizes and ransack their holds in safety. At Filuk it was resolved to spend seven days, during which period the ships were thoroughly rummaged.

"The English rummeged the *Taufiqi* for seven dayes, and every day ten English bored holes in the timbers to find mony. They plundered her of all arms and ammunition, of all goodes of valew and money and jewells. Of the mony the captain reserved the one parte, halfe the other was devided amongst the generalitie, and much the English saylors conseled. Suche violence was never done to anie Mussulman, by anie Portugall, or Englishman before. Having completed the plundering of the *Taufiqi*, which was done without much trouble, the principall men having been taken aboard the *Roebuck* the three set sail for Socotra where it was hoped to find the *Samaritan*."

Contrary winds necessitated them putting into the island of Abdulkari about four days from Filuk, and here came the turn of the *Mahmudi*, the officers of which, proving obdurate, were given of the best the pirates could afford, it being recorded that: "For tenn dayes they continually serched her and found nothing. Then they tooke the nochada, and bund both his hands, and tied mach to his fingers which burnt them to the bone, and then he confest where laye the mony, and soe were brought aborde the rialls. Then sayde the English; Heere bee the rialls where bee the ebrahimis for wee knowe thatt you have store of ebrahimis.

"And thenn they burnt the nochada againe, and the boatswaines, the merchants and the carpenters untill they were neere dead, and then they confest all whatsoever they knewe, especiallie the jeweller from

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Diu. Wee of Surat oftentymes told the captaine thatt imediately on the arrival of the *Taufiqi*, the English shipps woulde be sent in his search and surprizall. He ansered, I belong to the Kinge whose commition I have, they are but merchants and dare not meddle with mee."

The reports of the two nachodas differ as to the names they were able to pick up during the two months they were detained. He of the *Mahmudi* says: "The captaines name is Collergo, the lieutenante Frunglee with a ring in his left eaere, the porser Symon with a star (scar) in his face, the masters mates Hassallee and Dower. John Chubb, the cooper and the Carpenter Tom." The other gives the names as "Captain Gooliergoo, with one tooth before (projecting) the mate John (Jones) Frengely, purser, John Chub (Chips) carpenter, about 28 men in the ship, the flag in the foretop." Notwithstanding their most "inhumane usadge of the people to a certain Churchman aboard, Kwaji Abul Hussain, they returned againe 200 venecians (ducats) they had taken from him," probably in admiration of his courage.

The ships, having been now finished with, were released after being furnished with a bogus pass, the composition of three of the rascals, one having written it, a second signed it with a Dutch name, and the other superscribed the address. Gorged with the plunder of the two junks, and anxious concerning her consort, the *Roebuck* sailed for Mohilla, where she arrived at the end of February 1636. She found the pinnace about half-finished, and Oldfield, with all but twenty-three of the crew of the *Samaritan* dead, so, embarking Cobb and the survivors, she left for Johanna in order to careen and re-fit.

The same day there came in the *Crispiana*, outward bound to India, the captain of which, Lee, hearing of the exploits of the *Roebuck* in the Red Sea, sent for Ayres to come aboard. He says: "I hadde an intent

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toe have broughte himm withe mee, but by reson of the Kings letter with his hand and seale, as also his commission and the letters of assistance which hee shewed, it was thought fitt, after a consultacion we hadde aboute it, to cleare him."

In June they were still at Johanna with the *Roebuck* high on shore having her bottom sheathed after careening, when the Company's ship, *Swan*, outward bound, came in. In accordance with the usual custom when a single ship was careened in a native harbour, some of the cannon had been taken ashore and mounted in a battery commanding the ship and the harbour to guard against surprise. John Proud, master of the *Swan*, who was not so easy going as Lee, on hearing of the piracies of the *Roebuck*, realised that compensation would be demanded from the Company for the plunder of the *Taufiqi* of Surat, so, after seeing Cobb's commission, he called a consultation at which it was decided to take the bold step of disregarding the King's commission and authorities and arresting the *Roebuck* and her company as pirates and taking them back to India to stand trial.

On 26th June Cobb and Ayres came aboard the *Swan* with a demand for carpenters and provisions in the King's name. "Therupon Captain Proud caused his owne commission toe be redd and arrested the said Captain Cobb with Mr. Ayres, and all under their command, by virtue of his commision and in the King's name, and forthwith gave order that John Wilson oure purser, and Arthur Kenistone (Kynaston) porser of the *Roebuck* aforesaid should goe ashoare and take notiss of the monies, and bring it aborde toe bee kept under Captain Cobbs owne custody in the rowndhowse, where he was accomadated (in arrest).

"But Captain Cobb at Mr. Ayres, his instigation, commanded his coxon with the rest of his crew to goe ashoare, there toe resiste anie of us, who should goe

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to demaund eyther monie or goodes or aniethinge elce there, and mayke some of our gutts flie aboute our heeles. Oure two boates forthwith went ashore toe the same intent, but before wee came neere toe the place wher their shipp lay on shoare, wee were charged by David Jones on oure lyves toe come noe neerer, all theire menn beeing upp in armes, theire drum beatinge, theire shipp well armed and manned a fort raised on the side of the hill, where they had planted foure grete peeces toe commaunde the shipp, and also some small shott, each man having foure musketts redy laden standinge besyde him, and alle of them bindinge themselves be oathes to losse their lyves ere they woulde surrender the monies.

"Wherupon, nighte growing on, and wee seeing them soe resolute that wee coulde not accomplish the thinge wee desired without bloodshed, and likewise consideringe thatt we were all subjects of the one Kinge, wee returned aborde meaning, if possibel might bee, to tayke some other course. The next daye Andrew Trumball was sent ashore to demande of David Jones, the reson for suche resistance who replied he woulde surrender nothinge without order of Captain Cobbe, and thatt if we came neearer he would blowe our gutts out, and then blowe upp the shipp rather than parte withe the monie, or goodes."

Seeing the determined attitude of the pirates, and unwilling to resort to arms in presence of the large number of armed natives assembled near by, who would most probably fall on the victor when decimated, Proud dropped the semblance of force and commenced to negotiate. The result was that ultimately the pirates agreed to surrender the money and jewells taken from the Surat junk, to be taken back to Surat in charge of one of their own men, and, if not confiscated, to be returned to the Royal Treasury in England. Nothing was said about the Diu junk, which, being under

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Portuguese protection, was apparently considered lawful prize.

But here again they had to reckon with David Jones, who flatly refused to obey the written order sent ashore, "wherupin Captain Cobb was much mooved and went ashoare in the skiffe. Besides went oure longboate mand, and some few small shott alsoe in the skiffe. The boates were noe sooner within shott of them butt off comes a shott at them, wherupon Captain Cobb stood up in oure boate, and called to Mr. Joanes and bid him have a care of what hee didd. Butt notwithstanding, his commaund was bye himm slighted, and insted of obeying itt gave order for two more peeces to be shoot off at oure boate wherin his captain was, which was performed at Mr. Joanes his order.

"After which Captain Cobb commaunded him to surrender. His answer was that hee would nott, for what he defended was his Maiestie's and for his accompt; wherupon his captain charged him not to father his own theeverie upon His Majestie. On Mr. Joanes beeing tolde hee woulde bee carryed to Suratte toe anser for his evil deeds hee sayd he wolde blowe upp the shipp first ande itt would cost much hott water to get himm."

Eventually the difficulty was overcome by David consenting to hand over the money, probably with the reservation that there was plenty more to be had from the same place, and in the end money and jewels amounting to £9712, according to the Court Minutes, was surrendered without himself accompanying it. This matter settled, all was plain sailing. Once more the King's authorities were brought out and the *Roebuck* supplied with all she demanded and re-fitted by the carpenters of the *Swan*, who also obligingly built up the sides of the *Samaritan's* longboat, so enabling it to keep the sea and act as a tender to the *Roebuck*.

As might have been expected, no sooner was the

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Swan safely out of the way than the pirates were off again to the Red Sea, this time on a still more profitable cruise. The luck that followed them still held good, for they, by only a few days, escaped the *Blessing*, a large ship that had been dispatched from Surat, with orders to bring them to Surat or rid the seas of them, commission or not. Captain White ruefully reports that: "The *Roebuck* departed from Johanna 15 dayes before my arrival bound again toe the Red Sea in porsuite of their mischevous designes."

To which President Methwold adds:

"Nowe even this very day the towne is full of news dispeeded hither from Cambaii that divers shipps were tayken in the Red Sea, amongst others two of Diu which were said to have lost 150, or 250,000 ryalls of eight, but by how manie shippes, or by whome is not related, only the English beeing most suspected. Whilst confering on this business news is arrived from the Captain of Diu wherin he bitterly complayneth of the continewed robberies perpetrated by the English that have againe this yeare tayken two shipps importing 90,000 ryalls of eight in gold and silver. Hee advised besydes that there is tayken a vessel of Pore, and also a junk belonging to Dabull, and all done by a small English shipp and a boate; hee saieth the same shipp that robbed hereabouts last year, assisted withe the *Samaritan's* boate built up higher and accommadated to this wicked purpose."

ESCAPE OF THE PIRATES TO ENGLAND

The *Blessing* now again sailed for the Red Sea and having cruised for some time off the Straits of Bab-el Mandeb and the island of Socotra, returned to Surat, to be greeted with the news that the *Roebuck* had evaded him and was now, glutted with plunder, on her way home via the Comoros. Away went the *Blessing*, as

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hard as she could pelt, and arrived at Mohilla four days before Christmas to find that the *Roebuck* had left for Johanna, a week before. Once again luck favoured the *Roebuck*, or the old adage was verified, for though the *Roebuck* was actually in harbour when the *Blessing* came off the port, White was unable to enter by reason of contrary winds and currents.

These same factors favoured the *Roebuck*, which at once put out to sea, and, passing within a league of the impotent *Blessing*, to whom she bequeathed the half-built pinnace and the *Samaritan's* boat, bade him a sailor's farewell and disappeared over the horizon. Making her way leisurely enough, she arrived at Falmouth on the 10th May 1637, having on board cash and plunder to the value of £30,000 to £40,000. The exact amount was never known, as the money and other stuff was at once handed over to the Royal Treasury, and the crew, after being given a gratuity of £20 per man, dismissed. Probably their real profit was not less than ten times that amount, and that of the officers, whose opportunities were better, much more than that.

But a comparison of the claims and reports enable us to form a fairly accurate estimate of what she actually made, which would be about £90,000, made up as under:

	Reals.
Claimed for the Diu junk first captured . .	117,000
Plunder of two junks in the second cruise . .	150,000
Plunder of Dabull and Pore junks (estimate) .	60,000
Total	327,000

In January 1634 the real was valued at six shillings, which would make the total value some £98,000, from which we may deduct ten per cent. for over estimates. This is exclusive of the cash and jewels recovered by John Proud from the plunder of the Surat junk, and

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as £30,000 to £40,000 was acknowledged, we may safely assume that the *Roebuck* brought home three times the former amount.

The compensation paid by the Company for the Surat junk amounted to £22,413, 15s. 6d., and as they only recovered £9712, the balance may be added to the account of the *Roebuck*. The news of her depredations and the enforced compensation paid by the president at Surat after imprisonment and insult had reached England before the arrival of the pirate, and at once the Company took legal steps for redress, and the attachment of the vessel in the Court of Admiralty, though strong hints had reached from the Court as to the advisability of dropping the matter and cutting their losses; which, for all they ever got, they might as well have done.

An order for the attachment of the *Roebuck* and all on board was certainly issued, but owing to delay in execution, Ayres, Cobb, and Jones disappeared, as did the money, etc., which was secretly landed. Bonnell fled to France to avoid the fate of Kynaston, who was apprehended, though he might have saved himself the journey, for very shortly Kynaston was released by the direct order of the King. For years the matter dragged on until, in 1643, Ayres and Cobb were arrested under a warrant form from the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and confined in Rochester Jail. However, both were ultimately released as not worth the expense, and so the matter of the piracies of the *Roebuck* dropped into the limbo of unredressed grievances debited to the Stuart kings. A more shady transaction would be hard to find.

THE PIRACIES ATTRIBUTED TO THE COMPANY

But the repercussion of these piracies upon the affairs of the Company and their servants in India. At

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the moment of the news reaching Surat, Methwold, the president, was at Swally superintending the loading of the *Discovery*, due to sail for England. On being apprised of the accusations of piracy against the English, he went to see the Mussulman Governor of Surat, who, though receiving him very coolly and permitting his followers and the injured merchants to show their resentment, took no further steps at the moment, other than to express his opinion that the piracies were the work of Englishmen, and to place a guard on Methwold and the factory and an embargo on their goods.

The next day matters altered for the worse, Methwold and Peirson, his second in council, being called to the house of the Governor and required to deposit three lakhs in security for the payment of the plundered merchants, the money to be refunded if the English were cleared. On Methwold declining to deposit the amount, which indeed was not in his power, he and his associate were put into a filthy prison, where they were nearly suffocated with heat and eaten alive by vermin, where they stayed for three days. At the end of this period the Governor consented to open a door which looked on to the street.

Though this gave more air it made matters worse in another direction, for the whole populace assembled to mock and jeer at the defenceless Englishmen. "Besetinge the object of theire opprobious revilinges until they had weried of gluting theire eys withe oure despicable position." On the third day the *Taufiqi* arrived in the river, whereupon the prisoners were brought to court and confronted with her master and his evidence. Strong in the conviction that his countrymen were incapable of such a crime, Methwold said so and placed the blame on two French pirates, which had been in the Red Sea the previous year, and might have returned.

But this assertion was met by the production of the

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pass given in a moment of bravado by Ayres, and the testimony of the nachoda, that the men spoke English, had English names, and sailed under the English flag. This was supported by the evidence of the pass, a triple effort written in English, which, though signed by a Dutch name, was held to prove that the vessel was manned by Englishmen, some of whose names, though barbarously corrupted, were recognisable. Confronted by this strong and convincing evidence, Methwold, after enduring much more imprisonment and abuse, for a period of eight weeks, consented to give a lakh of security which he obtained by hypothecating nearly everything the Company possessed at Surat. In addition the factors at Agra Ahmedabad and in Sind were imprisoned and their goods sequestrated.

To cut short the narrative, the matter was eventually settled by the Company paying £22,413, 15s. which, deducting the credit of £9712, 10s. from Proud's recovery, left them a cash loss of £12,710, 5s., which was doubled by the loss of profits and detention of shipping during the disturbed period. Add to this the cost of the *Blessing*, which had been employed for twelve months in pursuit of the pirates at a cost of £500 per month and it will be found that the Company was out £30,000 in cash by the exploits of the *Roebuck*, to say nothing of the loss of prestige.

As for the Diu and other junks, all that was ever paid for them was a sum of about £8000 (included in the total), which, being in the hands of the Portuguese at Goa, was confiscated. So ended one of the most interesting episodes in the early history of the merchant venturers.

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CHAPTER XI

FRANCIS DAY, THE FOUNDER OF MADRAS (1642)

FRANCIS DAY—THE QUARRELS BETWEEN DAY AND TRUMBALL—TRUMBALL'S INDICTMENT—TRUMBALL'S REPLY TO DAY—THE COURT OF DIRECTORS INTERVENES

FRANCIS DAY

KIPLING wrote of India as a Punjabi, who has no sea trade. It was not till he had been round the world a way that the real story of the Empire trade came to him and he came to give the merchant and the mariner their true standing *vis-à-vis* the official and the soldier. Trade is the life-giving current of nations, and even the best officialdom but its servants. The "captains and the kings" may have departed, yet Madras still remains a bright gem in that diadem of cities founded on trade that encircle the British Empire, even though it found birth in a squalid cluster of fishing villages two hundred and ninety years ago by the agency of him of whom we shall now write.

To all but the few the name of Francis Day is but an empty one devoid of personality, and yet there is ample colour extant to clothe that name with his virile personality, redolent of the period, its vices, virtues (such as they be), manners, morals and speech, and with him others of the first fathers of Madras, whose names are equally shadowy in the persons of Andrew Cogan, Thomas Fenistone, Thomas Clarke and Agent Greenhill, whose tomb still survives in the cemetery of Fort St. George. How little human nature changes

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during the centuries we may see by extracts from those brittle old pages, wherein, by spidery calligraphy and confused spelling, is set down the daily life and doings of these Englishmen of a past era.

In this case, indeed, does the term British better apply, for a principal actor in our comedy of old Madras is one of those rare Scots who served the merchant venturers, and a typical merchant shipmaster, a trifle drunken and truculent, but withal interesting and amusing if blunt in speech, rude in manner, and ever ready with fist, foot, or rope's-end, to curb an "infynite pryde." Of Day it should be said at the outset, that though also drunken, and, in the matter of private trade and other matters, dishonest, he was an able and strong man who did good service for his employers, especially by forcing them to acquire the site and build the Fort of St. George, even incurring heavy charges on his sole responsibility in doing so.

It was on this account that he went home in the latter end of 1640, and, after having justified himself, returned in the *Hopewell* (Andrew Trumball, master), to Madraspatam on 4th July 1642. Our first glimpse of Trumball is in the year 1633 as mate of the *Falcon*, and the second in 1636, when, as master's mate of the *Swan* at Johanna, he was sent to demand from David Jones, mate of the pirate ship *Roebuck*, the restitution of plunder taken from country ships in the Red Sea. The encounter of the Celt and the Briton was remarkable for the strength of the language used, which is faithfully set down.

However, the ardent desire of the redoubtable Davy (godfather of the Locker) to eviscerate his opponent and strangle him with his own digestive organs remained at that, for, willing though the Scot was for the encounter, the Welshman's position behind a four-gun battery hampered his advance. Still, the verbal cannonade was not very unequal, Andrew being capable

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of, and using, magnificent bursts of invective when roused. His own character was a trifle blown upon even before this, for in November 1640 we find President Cogan reporting the "dishoneste practices of Trumball, master of the *Hopewell*, who for tobacco, strong waters, and suche like merchandiz of his owne, hath cawsed the purser to enter even to the full of manie menns accompts, whiche makes them fitt for anie other service as soone as they gett ashoare, they runinge to the Portugall. He has also sold soe manie barrs of lead that there is no sale for that of the Company."

However, the *Hopewell* had left before the complaint got home, with Francis Day as factor in charge, for there were no deadheads on passage in the Company's ships. Though there appears to have been some bickering on the voyage, it was not serious, for the interests did not yet conflict in the matter of private trade or making money from illicit freights. After unloading her cargo for Madras the *Hopewell* was dispeeded to Balasore to land more there and fill up with cargo and passengers for Masulipatam and Persia. From now commenced those quarrels and squabbles between the two which give us so lively a picture of the manners and morals of the merchants and master mariners.

THE QUARRELS BETWEEN DAY AND TRUMBALL

Usually this matter was a mutual arrangement, the men sharing the profits or conniving at each other's separate transactions. But in this instance Day, who was a very senior merchant and a strong-willed and daring man, refused to conciliate the shipmaster, and defied him, with the result that Trumball took a note of all his nefarious transactions and reported them to the president at Surat in due time. Though, as usual

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with informers, he affected a high sense of public duty or loyalty to his employers, Trumball's motive was merely revenge for a refusal of opportunity or share of the plunder. What the profits were will be seen, and also how men receiving such insignificant salaries could retire with vast sums equalling centuries of pay.

"At Balasore wee tooke in 16 passengers for Masulipatam at Rs. 15 per hedde, and 35 for Persia at 46 per hedde, and frete amounting to Rs. 17,854, of whiche Mr. Day brought to accompt only Rs. 6345. Further he imbarked on account of himself and Mr. Greenhill 117 bales of calico. Moreover he cawsed to bee put aboarde suche quantities of provisions, as hee tearmed them, for the Persians for whiche noe frete was paid, though he received guifts in liew that sixty bales of youre sinnamon had to be left behind. During this stay at Balasore for two months and 15 days Mr. Day charged Rs. 1400/ for provisions, though in the estimacion of men thatt knowe the place hee colde nott have spent more than sixty rupees, a beefe being boughte for one rupee or one rupee and a halfe, other provisions as cheape.

"At Masulipatam hee stayed soe longe on his private business that bye reson of losing the windes, and to avoyd the theevish Malabarrs, I was forsed to mayke a new passage (outside Minicoy), bye reson of the passangers lumber so choking the decks thatt I could only come att foure guns. At Gombroon, the sayde Mr. Day landed firste his owne private trayde, and tayking a howse next door to yours entertained the whoale of the broakers to goe abroad and bring merchants bye the wiche menes hee solde all his owne goodes, and none of yours. Soe grete was the crowd thatt I was forsed to have two menn to mayke way for mee iff I hadde aniethinge to doe with himm.

"In regarde I tooke the wate of the Persians goodes becawse hee sholde nott wronge the Companie in the

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frete of them hee followed mee when I was walkinge oute syde of the towne, and wounded mee withe his wepon. I having nothing in mye hands butt a rattan." This is not easy to believe. Trumball's past record and that to be set down shows him to have been about the last man in the service of the Company to suffer assault, especially when he had a "rattan" or stout stick in his hand. Having taken aboard passengers and freight amounting to Laris 27,738 (£1090), of which Day put to account only Laris 9385 (£470), the *Hopewell* sailed for Dabhol, where Trumball declared open war by refusing to land the "runas, rosewater, simorianes (agate beads), and other private trade Day had bought at Gombroon to sell at Dabhol, and by refusing to put in at Tranquebar to take aboard betel nut value 6000 rials of eight on the joint account of Day and Greenhill."

Trumball continues: "Himselfe and his plot, swore a grete oath (probably several) and plotted withe mye men to 'drawe a hedde' upon me, intimating that it was impossible to gett trade soe longes I remayned in the shipp." This expression still survives in America. It means to get rid of a person. Trumball alleges that another pretence was that he ill-treated his men, which he denies, virtuously alleging that "in alle the voiage I never whippt, nor duck't a man, nor didd ever exceede eighte blowes with an inch rope, unless for fault well merited." Of this more in its proper place. The upshot was that on arrival at Madras the crew refused duty, whereupon the president and council decided to suspend Trumball and refer his case to the principal council at Surat.

It being undesirable that the ship should remain idle, it was decided to dispatch her to Tranquebar, for "payntings" (hand-printed calicos) which Day represented were to be had very cheap. His real reason will transpire. There being no shipmaster available, Day

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himself was placed in charge of the voyage, and, after an eventful passage, during which he nearly capsized the ship twice, arrived safely at Tranquebar. Probably, to celebrate his arrival without any more disaster, he gave a feast to the crew and the Danish merchants, the opening of which was announced by a salute of 110 guns.

TRUMBALL'S INDICTMENT

Judging by the fact that in a few days the united efforts of the Danes and English disposed of two butts of canary wine (256 gallons) and two butts of arrack (216 gallons) the consumption of good cheer was on as imperial a scale as the salute. Naturally, when "thatte same nighte a grete storm arose, the shipp was in grete danger, in regarde all were druncke and the portes open belowe, for which William Hills chefe mayte was kept in irons for six weeks."

The indictment continues:

"I hadd almost forgot to mension another kind of trayde Mr. Day broughte from Trinckumbarre. There was one Captaine Sampson belonging to the Danes who had gone for them on some imployment to Macassar; butt his wyfe and two wayting gentlewomen were brought from Trinckumbar to Madraspatan for the particulier accountt of Mr. Day; for whose residence hee must build a howse equall to what shee lived in at Trinckumbar. Nevertheless, the Company must pay for itt, for Day's condicion is to mayke whatt benefitt he can of others, and kepe whatt he calls his owne faste. The aforesayde Sampson is the chefest and richest seaman the Danes have in all India, whose wife and servants and jewells and everythinge else portable Mr. Day hath brought to Madraspatan." Day believed in wholesale operations.

"Wherebye it is thoughte that iff there bee not a

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generall quarrel betwene the Danes and the English, yett a private betwene Mr. Day, and Captain Sampson can hardly be avoyded. Mr. Day laid out 4000 rials of eight on his owne account, and 2000 on that of Mr. Greenhill and hath an equal amount at Gingeli, and a horse hee boughte in Persia for 1000 abbasis (£75). Alle this is aparte from the cash he hath with him, and alle made in eleven months, though he carryed oute from England nott more than £100 in money. Sometymes I have asked him in familiar, whether if oure masters shoulde heare of his actions thay woulded nott keepe his wages and adventure. His anser was that at all times hee would venture £100 for £150, and soe neyther valew his wages nor his stocke that hee putt in with the company.

"Mr. Thomas Peniston, another of youre factors on the Coast, is by estimacion worth 80,000 rials. He hath maryed tow gentlewomen to two souldiers, and a third is resident with him. Mr. Thomas Winter, another of youre factors on the Coast, is by estimacion worth 20,000 rials besydes in adventure sent to Persia another 10,000. Hee hath marryed his gentlewoman to a souldier, bye whom hee had two children, one of which came into England in the *Mary*. And Mr. Day and these are well versed in gaming and noe day cometh amisse for thatt exercise. Mr. Henry Greenhill, another of youre factors on the Coast is by estimacion worth 12,000 ryalls.

"Hee keepeth a gentlewoman by whom hee hath two children, and a third on the stocks. At the christening of his second child there was shott off 300 brasse bases, with three volloeyes of small shott from the souldiers in the castle, and 13 guns from the castle. But the powder was paid for bye himm. He hath built for this gentlewoman, who was formerly belonging to Mr. Day, a very faire howse (apparently this commoditie was interchangeable). These foure gentlemen

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are alle sworne brothers, and they passe an oath to each other not toe deserte each until theire endes are gayned.

"And one pricipall cawse of raysing these men to suche a heighth of pride and riches which they now possess is the keepinge of mighty stockes of money, wiche they call theire owne with wiche they buy upp all cloth and payntings. And when youre shipps come to the Coaste in June or July, they mayke 50 per cent. profitt order beeinge given to alle broakers and weavers within 14–16 mile nott to sell below the price sett up bye these menn.

"In oure passage to Persia the Moores invited Mr. Day myeselfe and the purser to a feaste which wee excepted off. And when they had eate, they fell to drinkinge, tell Mr. Day had soe much hee colde tayke noe more, for in my contientce hee had 20–24 cupps within himm. Aboute five in the morninge wee went to supper when the purser fell oute withe me and strucke att mee. Mr. Day beeinge in the rownd howse come oute betwene drunk and sober and called toe the purser, saying 'Ned, come hither; the master shall have nothing to doe withe thee?' What remidy colde I use but patience.

"Nevertheless, I commaunded the purser to leave his railinge att me and goe to his cabbin; neyther of wiche would hee do. Then I tould Mr. Day he did ill to countenance any man thus againste mee. Neyther used I any more wordes to himm than these for I know well what manner of man Mr. Day is. Drinkinge with the Moores at Ballissarra, hee soe disguised himself in their presence thatt they sent himm awaie in a palankeene out of which hee fell. And another tyme hee mayde himselfe soe drunke at Persia that hee rann intoe the sea, and was lyke to have drowned himselfe."

Those who rejoice in intimate personal details of the manners and customs of our forerunners will find plenty here. It should be understood that the gentle-

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women referred to were not Europeans, and that it was the custom for the richer classes to hand over their discarded mistresses to soldiers, with a consideration on account of second-hand goods. Having given Trumball a full and free field, let us extend the same courtesy to his accusers. Henry Bassano, steward, testifies:

"The master had sometymes a gallon of wine, and never less than a pottle (half a gallon) eache day for his owne particulier besydes an extra quantity when hee hath bin disposed to bee merrie alle of wiche hee directed mee to charge upp to the ship, and the factories, and when I refused hee severall tymes bete and strocke mee until I complied." (Bassano seems to have been a Goan.) Thomas Clarke recounts seven instances of being beaten by Trumball, whilst Robert Wycherly narrates that: "Atte the masters command I broughte to himm the Kinges commition which was then whole, as hee was going over the side I seeinge whatt condicion hee was inn tooke the commition oute of his hande, and carryed itt into my cabyn where the ratts eate it. Likewise the sayd Mr. Trumball wished mee that if any bodie asked me how the commition came torne I should tell them itt was torn in the combustion (spontaneous)."

TRUMBALL'S REPLY TO DAY

There is no detail of the charges made by Day, who says that he will neither admit nor deny those of Trumball, but leave it to the evidence of the witnesses, "charitie and Christianity requiring mee to requite evill with goode." Yet he must have made some for we have Trumball's reply to them:

"I denie thatt I used the chirurgeon (John Reynolds, who died a little later) in a cruell horrid manner. He charged mye servaunt eight pounds for treting him for

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a disease, and when I tolde himm it was escessyve, he ansered hee wolde mayk what rates hee thought fitt. Beeing further asked why hee carryed medicines ashore when there were no sicke menn there, hee replyed I shoulde never knowe; which mooved me; seeing his infynite pryde to stricke himm three foure blowes with an inch rope." This inch rope seems to have been rather a favourite instrument of correction with Trumball. Rope's-ending the surgeon for "infynite pryde" seems rather an extreme measure.

"As for the purser I was nott unkinde to him, giving up mine owne cabbin to himm when sicke. The Boatswaine was nott made to worke whenn ill and never once beten I onlie reprooving for his slowe procedinges in suche tearmes as best befitted him." (We can imagine the luridity of those "tearmes.") "As for his sobrietie hee is a meere sott, and soe uncharritable that he refused to be reconcyled toe the gunners mayte though on his deth bedd. Nor did I strick John Leigh. I butt prevented him tayking some cases of stronge waters ashoare, the boate beeing fulle. Whereupon hee went forward and aft on the decke abusinge mee with what wordes hee chose, nor would hee goe into the boate untill I called for my rattan.

"As for Mr. Hill, I did nott goe aboute to displace himm, though in his ordinarie talke hee didd call mee nothinge butt a Scottish dogge, and why should they bee commaunded by a Scott. He is a base rascal and a sott I was werie of reprooving. At Masulipatam he contracted a disease, for the cure of wiche he desired to goe ashore at Ballissarra tellinge mee the chyrurgion was too deere. There hee stayed ten days, and abused all the merchantes, and the cheife fetched himm out of the badd howse at 12 of the night all a bambord (roaring drunk). When I reproved him for his conducte towards the women passengers hee abused mee with very ill wordes. But Mr. Day tooke his parte.

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Notwithstanding I sett him in the bilboes for eight houres.

"For Thomas Clarke I butt gave him a cuffe on the eare for absenting himself at Gombroon for 26 days on a bord (booze). Nor was I unkinde to the sicke men. If anything was wanting in theire diet, 'twas the fault of the chyrurgion. Theire is nott a day past since wee came oute of England but oure men had eyther beere, wine or arracke; unless it was in the passage to Persia when they kepte theire drinke tell they had a quantitie together, and mayde themselves drunke withe itt and fell to quarreling wherupon I gave order that they should have none but foure tymes a week, for 10–12 dayes. Had I knowne that a cupp of sacke had bin suche a prevalent medsine to mayke menn well asonne as they came ashore they sholde nott have wanted, but I dare say it was Mr. Day was the sicke mann that wanted sacke.

THE COURT OF DIRECTORS INTERVENES

The tale grows wearisome and no more of these charges and countercharges need be quoted, enough being given to point the moral, if not adorn the tale. The upshot was that the matter was referred to the Home Council, whilst Day was posted as principal at Bantam, and Trumball reduced to master's mate, the crews being unwilling to ship with him. But ship-masters being scarce on the coast, he was sent home in charge of a vessel, in which command he was confirmed, after being reprimanded and fined by the Court of Directors. Day's case being left until he returned to England.

Though he appears to have conducted himself well enough on the voyages out, Trumball returned to his old tricks on local voyages, there being frequent loggings for being drunk, overshooting his port, and

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of the very vice he was so eloquent about in Day's case—private trade to the detriment of his employers. The old system of ill-treating the crew continued, but as he extended his benefactions to the purser, ultimately caused his downfall. In September 1649 the *Falcon*, of which he was now master, arrived at Swally, to be at once deserted by purser and crew who went up to the factory, and so proved their case that Trumball was suspended and confined to a room in the factory.

Here he promptly proceeded to make himself a general nuisance, John Anthony testifying that "Mr. Trumball satt in his chamber with a bottell betwene his feete and a drawne sworde under his bedd drinkinge the whyle, and uttering fearful oathes, and cursing the councill," whilst Thomas Cogan, eavesdropping under the window, was pained by hearing Trumball naughtily say "a pox of God confound old Tom Cogan, and his abhord council," which verifies the old adage about listeners. As for his general behaviour, the president, before whom Trumball was called, writes:

"He presentlie called for a stool. I tolde himm it was fitter he first imparted his businesse, and I would enorder a stoole in due tyme if his demeanour deserved itt, and in the mene tyme hee mighte deliver his discourse standinge, or hee mighte departe. Hee nexte pretended a grete desire toe bee reconcyled toe alle menn in thatt his minde was gretely opprest with disquiet and discontente, and thatt all offenses mighte bee silenced, and noe more written or spoken of them. At laste, havinge weried himself and mee with impertinances more than matter, he parted away in the like sullen peremtory manner in whiche hee came."

The end of this present inquiry was that Trumball was dismissed and fined £200 for excessive private trade to the detriment of the Company, and for lending his purser money for the same purpose at 20 to 25 per cent., with the result that when the purser died his

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debts far exceeded his estate. "Bye suche menes hath Trumball about doubled his stocke every year, and alle this trade stollen aborde by his assistance and conniveance, unto youre unspeakable loss. We regret to give him soe badde character butt it is what hee deserves."

Having received sentence and been told to wait for the next ship home, Andrew departed in wrath "with manie foule wordes" to join his brother in the native city. The latter was a worthy scion of the family, having absconded after a bout of drunkenness, in which he had seriously assaulted the mate of the *Falcon*. The next heard of Andrew was when called upon to produce certain documents in support of a claim, which he did, "by casting them downe att the gate of the factory, menewhile abusinge the council with contumely and contemt."

At last, much to their relief, the truculent pair were sent home by the council, and the last we hear of Andrew Trumball is in March 1652, when both he and Day were called before the council to prove their respective allegations. They did so, with the result that in consideration of his exposure of "private trade and other misdemeanours, Trumball was fined £106 only, and his passage-money restored. Day, having left the service, and been heavily fined previously, was let go free, and this is the last record of two stout knaves.

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CHAPTER XII

THE ASTOUNDING VOYAGE OF THE *JOHN* (1644)

MASTER JOHN MUCKNELL—HIS QUARREL WITH MASTER KNIPE—MUCKNELL SEIZES THE SHIP FOR THE KING—HE GETS A ROYAL ENSIGN—MUCKNELL JOINS THE ROYALISTS

MASTER JOHN MUCKNELL

"CIVIS ANGLICUS SUM. Thatts mye glory," blustered seventeenth-century John Mucknell, master of the tall ship *John of London*, a blunt character whose pride of nationality was only equalled by his keen and inordinate capacity for "sacke." Let Thomas Buckingham testify: "Three score houres, he would bragg, he could sitt and drinke and not bee sleepy. And when hee was in his cupps he would say, 'I am a Prince at sea, I am the proudest man on the face of the earth. I am an Englishman, and were I to bee borne againe I would againe bee borne an Englishman. I am a Cockney. Thatts mye glory."

Who then was this John Mucknell who so gloried in his nationality? An example to the modern Englishman, who seems rather ashamed of it than otherwise. And a Cockney, too! Even more marvellous; for who now dares, much less be proud of, an origin "East of Cheap." Let him be rescued, then, his deeds and speech, from the Records of the East India Company. And in so doing, we shall see a faithful picture of the smug citizens and the rude masters and mariners of three hundred years ago when the tubby oaken cockboats of the merchant venturers ploughed their years-long

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furrows to and from the coasts of Ormuz, Ind, and Far Cathay.

Let us see once more how they quarrelled, and revelled; how they cozened and conspired; how they mutinied and divided the spoil from "marchant and Portugall" on capstan-head and deck-plank to the accompaniment of swingeing draughts of sack, of lurid and long obsolete and forgotten oaths, and the ringing sound of lordly pieces of eight and golden ducats and zecchins. Let us show you these men who spoke as they thought and behaved as they spoke, rudely and clamorously, as befitted men who lived hard and died harder; who had made the great open spaces of sea and land their heritage, and thought less of a round three years' voyage in a pestilential little ship than is now thought of a week's trip in a floating palace such as could stow a pair of their ships on its upper deck.

John Mucknell, master of the ship *John*, of a full 360 tons, sailed from the Downs in February 1644, with cargazoon valued at £36,000. Like the vast majority of the Company's shipmasters of that period, he had entered a seafaring life through the hawse hole (right forward) and served long before the mast ere he attained the quarter-deck. Naturally, with such early experiences at a rude period, he was a man of rude temper, of violent expressions, and strong prejudices against the more polished merchants, and, in addition, an exceptionally heavy drunkard: in short, with his vices a trifle exaggerated, a typical shipmaster of the Jacobean period.

At that time the Civil War was at its height, and though the Company, as a general body, steered clear of political entanglements or of showing any open sympathy with one or the other side, it was but natural that their individual servants should have, and express, their own opinions. As was but natural, also, both as citizens of London, which was a stronghold of the

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Parliament, and merchants whom the enforced levy of ship money had hit hardly, their sympathies were against the King, against whom was also the matter of the piracies of Quail, Cobb, and Ayres, which he had countenanced and for which they had been mulcted in purse and imprisoned in person.

Though such a roystering blade as Mucknell had nothing in common with sober and sedate London merchants, and it was very probable that it was but contrariness that led him to so openly express his sympathy with the Royalists, he had, just before sailing on this voyage, suffered in purse and person for his too freely expressed sentiments. Thus the records:

"Mucknell and some friends were merrie in his howse at Wapping, and in their discourses they called the Parliament Round head Divell, for which the sayde John Mucknell was putt into prison whence it cost him £4/0/0 to be released. He sayde his desire was soe muche to goe to the king by reason of an abuse hee had received from the Parliament, now last beeing at home that hee was content to lose 500/ per annum for hee was in hopes ere longe to have the cutinge in peeces of some that were now burgesses in the Parliament."

HIS QUARREL WITH MASTER KNIPE

All this might have been but bombastic vapouring, to be dispersed by a few sea gales and the influence of sobriety and wholesome advice, had it not been for the presence of Edward Knipe, a senior factor whom we have previously met with in Courteen's Association, but now returned to the service of the London Company. With Knipe, who was an able man but of overbearing manner, and as vigorous of speech as Mucknell himself, were a number of other merchants on passage to Surat, all of whom resented the brusque

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manners and drunken habits of the shipmaster, and did not fail to let him know it. As for Knipe, the following quotation concerning another merchant aboard gives a fair idea of what manner of man he was:

"As for Mr. Henry Garry, I butt acquainted him that his manner and carriage did rather become a fiddler than a merchant; wherat he tooke soe much snuffe thatt hee hath not yet blowne itt oute. But I spake nothing in prejudice of his birth. I will say nothing in defense of itt because the partie thatt tolde mee he was borne in Venice of an Irish father and a Venetian mother, did not acquaint mee thatt they were lawfully married, and nothing more maykes mee suspect his legitimacion than excepcion tayken whenn no cause is given. A galled jade will soon wince."

Knipe's method of explanation savours somewhat of the apology of the midshipman who, when made to apologise to his superior for remarking that he was not even capable of a menial office, retracted by acknowledging that he was!

Such a gift of invective and innuendo was freely exercised on the ignorant shipmaster. The biting irony and sarcasm, however, though perhaps imperfectly understood, soon stung Mucknell to fury and a desire for revenge. Though a blustering and free-spoken man of Royalist sympathies, Mucknell, even though he afterwards declared that "before his departure hee had sent the King £100 with promise ere long to bring him a goode shipp," might not have proved so false to his trust had he not been goaded to it by continual interference from Knipe and his sarcasm, for nothing is so much resented by an imperfectly educated man.

Such, eventually, also was the opinion of the Court of Directors, for in April 1646 they informed the President and Council at Surat that "Wee are much surprised at your promoting Edward Knipe, for had hee but used moderacion and judgment, things mighte

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have been carryed oute better with John Mucknell and wee sustayned lesse losse and damage thann has nowe come to uss."

In April 1644 the *John*, the *Crispiana*, the *Blessing*, and forty other ships (the latter not belonging to the Company) left the Downs to a favouring wind on the same day. The slow sailing of the *Blessing* hindering the others, she was left to continue her voyage alone, the *John* and the *Crispiana* keeping company as far as the Malabar coast. But in May the two vessels overhauled Courteen's fleet of five ships bound for India, the coast of Africa, and Madagascar, at the latter of which they intended to set up a colony. In order to anticipate the African market it was decided by a consultation that the *John*, which was a new ship on her first voyage and a quick sailer, should go direct to Mozambique, and ultimately join the *Crispiana* at Johanna in the Comoro Islands, from whence both should keep company for India.

Almost from the opening weeks of the voyage friction had commenced between Knipe and Mucknell, for whereas the merchant was a precise Puritan (though not in language), with a keen sense of propriety and social distinctions, Mucknell was a roistering "Malignant," with none of either, who would drink at all hours with any of his crew, "calling into his roundhouse the most debausht, and ungodlie people in the shipp." Against these irregular and subversive courses, Knipe had entered a most vigorous protest, only to be answered that so long as Mucknell navigated his ship efficiently, what else he did and whom he associated with were no concern of the merchants.

Irritated at this reception of his remonstrances, Knipe spoke out in what Garry characterises as "moste unkind and arrogant language both to the master and myeself to oure grete griefe. The Master was muche dejected saying hee would rather dye than endure such chub-

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bings (rudeness)." The rejoinder to the accusations of Garry is probably a sample of what was said to Mucknell, Knipe denying that his unkindness "mooved Mucknell to teares, for suche behaviour was not uncommon with the master when he was mawdlin druncke, for then hee woulde fall into straing raptures, saying why might hee not come to bee Lord Admirall of England with abundance of suche idle foolish expresciions. As for Mr. Garry did but speak sharply when he disparaged London saying itt did more abownd with whoares than London and many other disgracefull speeches concerning citizens wives. But I did not call him sonn of a curtizan."

In addition to such plain speaking, which might have done little harm, it being characteristic of the period, Knipe threatened to have Mucknell superseded at Surat, whereupon a terrible exchange of strong language took place, only allayed by the intervention of the Reverend William Isaacson, to whom "the master promist reformacion of his conversation and manner of lyfe." So the voyage wore on, storm and calm, at sea and aboard, until in August 1644 the *John* arrived at Mozambique. Her haste had been needless, as there was no market for the goods, so after refreshing, she prepared to depart.

However, just before she did so a profitable passenger transaction offered in the person of the Portuguese agent at Mozambique, who, with his wife, family and a large number of negro slaves, both their own and for sale, desired passage to Goa. All such matters were the concern of the factor in charge of the voyage, Knipe, who, in accepting the passengers, and arranging for their accommodation, ignored the master so far as to assign the latter's own particular quarters, the roundhouse, to the Portuguese lady. Such a flagrant disregard of his rights and position aroused Mucknell to fury and it was with the utmost difficulty that he was

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induced by the other merchants to refrain from turning the lot out of the ship.

Eventually he was persuaded to accept two hundred reals of eight to be paid at Goa, but on consideration refused to accept Knipe's bond for the money, insisting on its being paid down on the quarter-deck in "goode English golde," which was done by Garry. In such shape the ship left Mozambique, and for a time all seemed plain sailing. But the match was still smouldering, and only needed connecting with the powder-barrel of Mucknell's anger. Much as he vapoured, we do not think that until now he had any serious intention of seizing the ship, nor would he have eventually done so, but for the injudicious actions of the factor, who thought he had reason for believing that Mucknell would avoid Johanna and, marooning thé passengers, seize the ship and go "on the account."

Whatever Mucknell may have intended, the next proceeding of the factor but precipitated if it did not actually cause the catastrophe, for he indited a peremptory letter to Mucknell without calling a proper consultation, and after having this signed by the other factors and merchants, had it publicly delivered to the master. Such an order, and even more its public delivery, irritated Mucknell exceedingly, for, "as soone as hee redd itt he fell a swaringe, and asked whether this was a consultacion or a mutiny; saying thatt he would not be dictated to by Jack Straws or Wat Tyler, and that their was noe neede for the noatt he having ordred his matts, to shape a course for Johanna before hee receved itt, and spent the night in drinking and swaringe at Mr. Knipe."

MUCKNELL SEIZES THE SHIP FOR THE KING

On hearing of this violent language, probably brought by mischief-makers, Knipe became alarmed and set

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the minister to make peace once more. But by now Mucknell had finally decided to seize the ship, though he "promist reformacion of his liffe, and conversacion. Yet between Mocambique and Johanna, hee plotted to invite the merchants, three of the matts, the minister, the chyrurgion, the boatswain, the carpenter and the gunner ashoare, to a banket under pretynce of being reconciled to Edward Knipe. Soe they had a grete store of good chere provided for them abord, and it was carried ashoare to be eatten.

"It soe happened that Edward Stanyon, and the cooper, having quareled, came ashaore with swordes intending to fighte, which was reported to Captain Mucknell, who therupon rose up from the table and sayde hee wolde stay the fighte, and putt the two menn into a boate. Then, leaveinge the company he came down to the shoare, and metinge the cooper, thrust him into the boate, and bayde the saylors pull for the shipp. When hee came abord hee ordered the boatswain to call all handes aloft wherupon they all assembled in the grete cabbin."

Two points foregone are that Knipe could be so singularly trustful. Probably he thought the master was a mere windbag he had successfully pricked and so allowed himself and the principal men to be gulled into being ashore all at the same time. The other is that of the cooper and the carpenter's mate having taken swords ashore to fight a duel, which later on became a prerogative of the superior classes. But it was then a common practice, and so continued for over one hundred years later, that men of all ranks should resort to deadly weapons to settle their differences. It was not until the opening decades of the eighteenth century that fist-fighting became at all general. To continue:

"Having assembled all the shipps company, John Mucknell caled for wine and dranke. When hee had

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druncke hee stood up. Ses he: Gentillmen, I have somethinge to say, and I will be breefe; ses Mucknell. Mr. Knipe has threattened to turn me out of the shipp when wee comes to Siratte; but I hope I have not so behaved myself that you will se me turned outt; to which they ansered and said they wolde nott, soe longes life lasted. Ses Mucknell. I have always found you able and honeste fellows thatt have stucke bye mee. I hope therfore you will nott now se mee disgract.

"Here I nowe sese uponn the shipp *John* for the Kinge and as soon as wee are off the Iland every man of you shall have 200 rials of eight apeece told down on the capstan hedde, and as soone as wee are cleare of this iland wee will breacke open the Portingalles chests, and the marchants chests, and see what money is in the shipp. Yow shall have two thirds and the Kinge one third. And wee will sett these blackes ashoare at Comorow, and then wee will awae to the Redd Sea, and see what purchas wee can tayke ther amongst the junckes. Then wee will goe for England. Looke, what monie in the shipp yow shall have $\frac{2}{3}$ and the Kinge $\frac{1}{3}$, and I will bee the man thatt will suffer, and answaire for yu all.

"You thatt are for the Kinge and will agree to this motion hold up youre hands. Upon which they all cryed 'One and alle' except about eighteen menn who were placed in irons. Therupon John Pearce and Richard Clarke desired leave to goe ashoare wherupon Mucknell called them Roundhead dogges,and thretened to cutt off their heddes spake they another such word. He further declared that if he saw two men speking together hee wolde cutt of the hedde of one of them and kept us (the noncontents) soe under thatt wee colde nott speacke one with another to know anothers mind; and wee had noe wepons to withstand them for all those in his plott had armes, and all the reste of the armes were maid fast with wiar.

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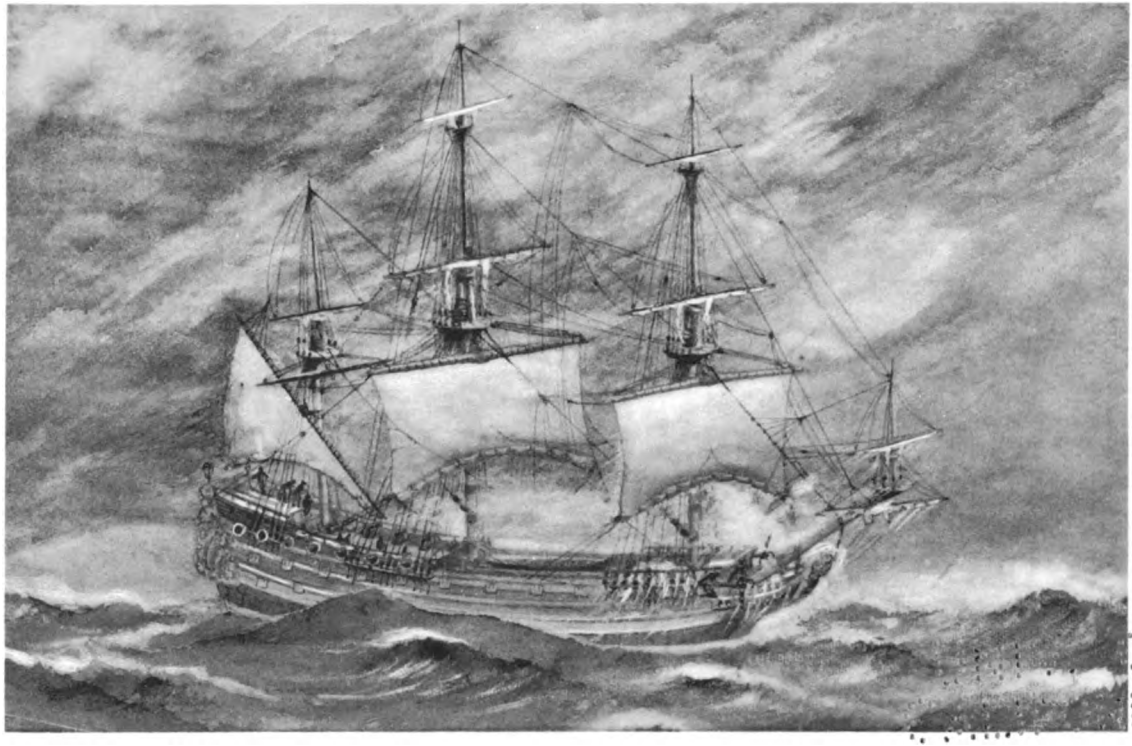

EAST INDIAMAN OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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"Then hee called all hands aloft on the decke and commaunds some more of his plott to arme themselves with musquetts halfe pikes, and swords, to make the gun roome secure. Then hee commaunded the boates to bee manned, and all the Portugall passengrs were put into the jellowatt, and Pearce and Clark ordered to row them ashore; hee drawing his sworde and thretining thatt if any man other dared gett intoe the boate he would cutt his hedde off and he commaunded thatt if any man did offer to swim ashoare that they shoulde shoote him.

"He then cutt the cabels in the halse and lett the shipp drive feringe if he stayed to weigh the anchor the seamen might change their minde, and putt hime by his pretence. Next they fell to drinkinge of helths, and he promist the seamen thatt all thatt was in the shipp shoulde be theirs. The wind beeing calm the *John* lay in site of Johanna for 24 houres during which tyme the chests were broken open and the goods, and the money and the jewells distributed. Eache man was payd in peeces of eight outt of the Companies monie thatt was sent out in the shipp.

"And eache man had two hards and half of redd and as much of grey cloth, as would make them two suites apeece, which was to engage them in the roberie as well as himself, for hee would say: Now Gentillmen, looke to yourselves for you are all as deepe in as I am. He soone again fell to drinkinge first with his officers and them with the ordinarie seamen. Three score houres, hee would bragg; he could sitt and drinke and nott bee sleepy, and when hee was in his cupps hee would say; I am a prince at sea, I am the proudest mann uppon the face of the earth. I am an Englishman, and were I to bee borne again, I would againe be borne an Englishman. I am a Cockny. Thatts mye glory."

However, after a time the project of going on a piratical cruise before sailing for England was aban-

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doned, as committing themselves too far and standing the chance of losing all, as the Company's ships on the coast would soon be after them. So it was decided to "keepe the blackes and the strong waters, and the cloath, and sell them at St. Kitts (West Indies) and soe load her up with tobackow for Ingland." Accordingly, round went the helm and away she sped, as the pirate chanty had it, "Off, and away for Augustine's Bay," the last point of departure for ships rounding the Cape for home and always a notable resort for pirates, liquor being cheap and women hospitable. Merrily they passed their stay there, and as merrily continued the voyage, all agog for the joys to be expected in England, for their easily earned cash. The tedium of the long days was beguiled by carousing and gambling, the usual solace of pirate crews, for all were flush of cash and a large quantity of wine had been taken aboard from Lisbon.

HE GETS A ROYAL ENSIGN

Soon after leaving St. Augustine's Bay the *John* fell in with the *Thomas and John*, a ship belonging to the Courteen Company outward bound for India. By virtue of the direct charter signed by King Charles, this ship was flying the "Royal Coulers" in addition to the St. George's Cross, which reminded Mucknell that he was still sailing under the flag of the Parliament. What right had a mere trading ship to fly the King's colours, when his own vessel, presented by Mucknell himself, was without them. Intolerable, but easily remedied.

Bearing down on the outward-bound ship, Mucknell hove her to by a shot across her bows and commanded her to send a boat aboard. Greatly marvelling at this rude greeting from a countryman, Captain Archer dispatched one containing two merchants and his mate, from whom Mucknell demanded "teo barells of

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powder 12 canes of mach (slow match) som candells, and the Kinges coulers. On beeing asked for his commition, hee lugged oute his cuttan (hanger) and tould hime there was his commishtion, and iff he hadde nott those thinges with a glasse he would be aboard of him. Hee ordered the gunns to be run oute redy for action, whiche put the Esquire's men in such feare that they gave him any stores he required."

Having obtained all he desired, Mucknell became very friendly, and the crews of both drank so many healths that three men belonging to the *Thomas and John* were left aboard the *John*, being "too druncke toe bee putt into the boate." Probably the remainder were in so joyful a condition that the utmost they could do was to get themselves aboard their own ship. This joyous adventure concluded, the *John* sailed on to St. Helena carefree and happy, as befitted a master who owed allegiance to none but himself for the moment.

But, as ever, there were weak-hearted amongst the crew, and the nearer they got to England the greater became their fears. Though all had shared in the spoil a few were unwilling to brook the consequences, and these thought to secure themselves by retaking the ship and handing it and Mucknell over to the Parliamentary Government. Owing to the constant watch kept on any suspected persons, no chance of secret meeting was possible at sea, so the ringleaders, who were three in number, took advantage of the stay at St. Helena to have a meeting ashore.

But drunken and voluble as he was, Mucknell had the saving virtue of suspicion, if it may be so called, and had a watch kept on the plotters, with the result that he was informed that three men were conspiring to "cutt hime and his partie off, and to have brought the shipp into the Downes again. Therupon hee sesed William Poynter when he came aborde, and having fastened his hands to the maine helyerds caused one

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of the blackes to cutt off his eares. He wolde have so served the other two, hadd nott manie of the crew begged himm on their knees to be content with sending them ashore.

"He ansered them never a worde; butt went intoe the rowndhowse, and tooke a pistole thatt was charged with a brace of bulletts in itt, and fired itt att his owne brest; and itt wolde nott goe off, and as hee was cockkinge of itt againe Edward Owen bracke intoe the rowndhowse and stayed his hande, or ells hee wolde have kild himselfe. Att St. Helena, he sett six Englishmen, and one Japane, and all the blacke women and children ashore; for his minde was changed that he would nott goe soe farre westward as St. Kitts."

From St. Helena the *John* went on to Ascension, where "John Mucnell went ashoare and many more with him, and hee told them thatt hee mighte doe the Companie as good service discoveringe what was on the iland as hee had prejudiced them in carrying theire shipp toe the kinge. Upon this iland wee found nothing but some fewe goats, quails, and an infinite number of sea fowle, which you may catch with the hande and grete store of fish and sea turtle. Butt on the iland there is noe inhabitant other than wee have mencioned. There is noe wood, nor spring of fresh water thatt wee colde find, and tis all over as burnte with fyre." (Ascension, being now off the track, had not been visited since the early sixteenth century.)

MUCKNELL JOINS THE ROYALISTS

From Ascension the *John* passed on warily to the Channel, and, after an escape from shipwreck in a fog off the Isle of Wight, attained Bristol, where Mucknell made over the ship to Sir John Pennington, then holding Bristol for the King. Sir John made him very welcome, as was only natural, considering what he

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brought, and gave him a free pardon, "soe all was rendred into Sir Johns hands. Moreover John Mucknell told him if hee might have leave to goe oute toe the Indies agayne he woulde bee oute but 16 or 18 months, and for every daye hee was awaye hee wolde bring the Kinge a thowsand poundes.

"Sir John wondred why hee shoulde desire to goe oute to the Indies againe, for, sayd hee, if the Companies shipps tayke you, you are a lost man for ever. But the Kinge hath more need of you here at home uppon the English Coaste. The next daye Sir John sent a despatch to Oxford to the King to lett him knowe what an act of worth and loyalty, Captain John Mucnell had done for his Majestie, and that he deserved honour and reward. The Companie (ships) are to have 11 months pay and 13 months gratuitie which made twoe years paye, and when itt plesed God to restore the King to his owne again everyone woulde be further rewarded according to his deserte. The seamen were all payed in peeces of eight of the Companie's money."

A casual mention of Mucknell as Sir John may be either sarcastic or be taken to mean that he really was knighted, which would not be surprising, in view of the fact that he had made over a ship, and in addition its cargo, worth £30,000, to the King. The honour, ir awarded, must have sat uneasily on this blustering tarpaulin. A certain portion of the cargo was recovered when the Royalists lost Bristol, and the *John* herself, which was commissioned as a man-of-war, did much damage to Parliamentary shipping before she was finally cornered by three Parliamentary ships in the Bristol Channel and driven ashore, a total wreck.

Mucknell escaped and was given another ship, with which he cruised on the home-track of ships from India, for, in 1647, the Company ruefully record that "John Mucknell and his rascalle crew have again escaped to doe further damage until God, or the

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Gallows shall ende them." A pious wish, but, so far as we can discover, there it ended. The last mention of him was as cruising off the West Indies. Probably his ship was sunk or abandoned when matters became too warm.

After some months on Johanna and considerable hardship and delay on the voyage to India, Knipe and the remainder reached Surat, the records of which are full of recriminations. Eventually Knipe was promoted factor at Agra, where he did very well, bravely defending a great caravan from an attack by robbers. Garry, about whose birth he was so sarcastic, was for a time one of the first governors of Bombay, though not a very successful one. Some of the crew, who drifted home from St. Helena, were put on trial for complicity, but all escaped for want of proof.

So ended one of the most interesting episodes in the history of the merchant venturers.

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CHAPTER XIII

WILLIAM METHWOLD AND HIS TIMES (1615–1653)

WILLIAM METHWOLD—MR. DRAKE'S CAFILA—THE FAMINE OF 1634—MR. METHWOLD AS PRESIDENT

WILLIAM METHWOLD

THOUGH a general chorus of adulation and rewards, both monetary and titular in proportion, greet the great and successful military leader, the merchant of equal importance, even though he founded and built the empire the other guards or expands, must usually remain content with such reward as he has achieved for himself, and often suffer the stigma of sordid and selfish ends, ending unknown to all but the few and unsung by none.

Should the warrior fail, he has at least the means left to him of a decent existence even if obscure. What the merchant adventurer gained the soldier holds, so permitting the merchant to expand his operations and spheres secure in the belief that the fruits of his labours will not be wrested from him. Until Utopia dawns, the soldier is indispensable, but the merchant adventurer leads the van of national trading success. But each class should be honoured according to its merits. As the Elizabethan poet wrote:

> Fortune hath devious ways to advance her followers.
> To some she giveth honour without deserving
> To other some, deserving without honour.

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Trade does not follow the flag—it usually precedes it.

Though many of the principal factors and merchants of the Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies, were able but dishonest, others dishonest without being able, and the multitude men who simply drudged through their allotted tasks, more or less honestly and ably, there were a number whose standard of honesty, ability, and integrity, both in business and private life was of the very highest. Of such was William Methwold, of whom Sir William Foster, than whom none is more qualified, thus writes:

"Alike in ability and character he stood head and shoulders above his predecessors and his colleagues. His period of office was an exceptionally arduous one. As he wrote: 'I knowe of no miserie nor trouble thatt I have not met withall in my last imployment in India.' Yet no danger daunted him nor did any emergency find him wanting, for his cool judgment at once pointed out the course to be pursued, and his energy and fixity of purpose wrested success under the most adverse conditions. In dealing with the Indian officials and merchants he was courteous and conciliatory whilst never forgetting his responsibilities as the representative of a foreign nation.

"The Dutch praised his affability and wished that other presidents were like him. To his subordinates he strove to be just and considerate whilst insisting on the exact observance of their duties to their employers whilst in private trade his example was of the best. Yet when occasion required he could be fearless in censuring even his Members of Council. Nor was he less outspoken in his letters to his employers, who, however, had the sense to respect his openness and in all matters accord their whole-hearted support, expressing their appreciation of his well written and digested letters, his measures for the prevention of private trade, and to reduce their great debt and

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expenses in India, and especially of the good service in coming to an agreement with the Portuguese to put an end to the marine and commercial warfare which had existed since the coming of William Hawkins." In token of their appreciation they eventually received him into their highest councils and made him deputy-governor by election.

We know nothing of the family and antecedents of William Methwold prior to his entry into the service of the East India Company in the year 1615, though they may be set forth on his monument in Kensington Church, if it still exists. But judging from the facts that his permanent home was at Brompton and that he founded almshouses in the Cromwell Road, we may assume that, like most of the prominent merchants, he was a Londoner—born, maybe, where he died. In the year 1615 he was sent out to Bantam, then the chief seat of the trade of the Merchant Venturers, and by March 1617 had so well acquitted himself as to be given charge of the *Unicorn*, a vessel deputed to investigate the Malabar coast with a view to founding stations thereon.

His report of the expedition gives us some idea of his character, it being a shrewd and well-reasoned document which, whilst giving all necessary details, animadverts upon the drunkenness and bad morals of masters and men of the Company's ships, their addiction to excessive private trade, and robberies from the Company's stores, etc. As a measure of prevention of private trade he recommended that all ships should be under the supreme command of merchants, though few of them were better in this respect than the shipmasters.

Probably by reason of this report, coupled with an ability then recognised, he was given charge of the newly founded factory at Masulipatam in August 1618, a charge he retained until 1623, when the continual

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false accusations of a jealous subordinate induced him to resign the appointment and eventually return to England in order to clear his character. From the commencement his position had been difficult, owing to "the insolency of the Dutches, and the impotency of the English in face of the grete number of ships they imploy and the grete financial resources they unsparingly imploy to impede the progress of the English and destroy their infant of trade." In addition, he had been left with very little assistance, for of the seven men landed with him three died, and two were invalided before April of the following year.

Amongst his reports we find the following: a feelingly written account of the death of Sir Thomas Dale, Admiral of the 1618 Fleet, and an old veteran of the English armies in Holland, which expelled the Spaniards, a service ill rewarded by those whom they rescued:

"Before wynde and tyde could give me leave to repair abourd the fleet arriving at Masulipatam, Sir Thomas Dale advised me of his grete extremitie of sickness and desired me to make some convenience for his entertainment ashoare. So, the next day I went abourd and broughte him to mine owne howse, where after twenty dayes of languishment with manie testimonies of good Christianity, contemt of death, and singular affection and zeale for your service, he dyeing, we were enforced to carry him to his last possession, which I have howsed and enclosed in the forme of a tombe." Yet this very letter ends with some very pungent comments on the manners, morals, and general character of the companies of the fleet.

For the next two years or so there are only reports on business matters and answers to the accusations of Matthew Duke, his second-in-charge, a man eventually severely singed by the fire he endeavoured to kindle around Methwold. The most interesting document is

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his account of a visit to the diamond mine of Golconda, "latelie discovered by a silly goatherd tendinge his flocke. This myne yieldeth grete store of diamonds, of which I boughte a small parcel." A later account relates that

"In Anno 1622 this myne was shut uppe and all restricted from visiting the place; the reasons some assyn to bee the care to keepe the commodities in request, soe nott to digg more untill that already found be disposed of. Others affirm that the coming of the Mogulls ambassador to the King of Golcondah with the peremtory demande of a viss (about 10 pounds) of the fairest diamonds hath caused this tempory cessation untill some competent present shall content the Mogull. . . . Since my coming (return) I have been informed that the myne hath been re-opened but found almost exhausted."

This would seem to dispose of the legend that the Koh-i-noor was from the mines of Golconda. There is another letter well worth quoting, giving, as it does, another interesting sidelight on the manners and customs of the merchants and factors. They and the seamen seem to have been much the same. "These factors sent to Pegu to recover what was there remaining, have spent all they were sent for, from first to last, and have framed faulse and formlesse accompts to cover their vileness. One of them Forrest hath made himself responsible for all the rest, they having lost all the money at dicing.

"Not only have they spent all, but tooke up more at exchange in the matter of 100 rials of eight (then 8 shillings) which must be payde by us. These Pegu factors are fownde to bee ryotous vitious and unfaithful. Some of their owne papers doe evince them soe which, with their persins were sent to Jacatra (Bantam). Their accompts were forged at sea, and alle their original papers they dis cast overboard, lest, cominge to light,

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they would disclose all their delinquencies and untruths. Forrest attempted to Flee but was brought back. He is a verie vilaine most audacious, dishonest and debaucht." Which is definite enough. "The 416 Pagodas which I left at the myne were honestly invested and myne order (receipt) returned. But my man was robbed on his return and in adition a peece of his eare cutt off which greeveth mee more than myne owne losse. This I beare with pacience though greevious to one of poor estate."

In May 1622 he was called on by the president at Bantam to answer the charges preferred against him by Matthew Duke, his inveterate enemy. We need not quote the answer, which was nothing if not vigorous, though certainly not abusive of his accuser, as so many others were of fellow-servants in similar case. As usual, he passes on to other matters in the same letter, the most interesting of which is the exposure of the methods of the Dutch, who jointly occupied the factory at Pulicat and allotted the proportion of the expenses.

"Wee thoughte itt an easie composition, thatt wee were to enter into (share them) their conquests without anie disbursements for former charges made. But the insolent faulse, senister, and disemuled proceedings of the Dutch and their arrogance in the place of commaund doe dayly teache us thatt oure masters had better have boughte more libertie with more expense. They make us paye oure parte of the ammunicion at the Holland price themselves buying it at the Indyen. They charge us with unnecessary souldiers whome they use to mann oute their frigatts on accation yet afford us noe more than oure square (base) lenth to lodge us."

Like so many more complaints preferred against the Dutch for such methods, which were referred home to the King, this was ignored for the usual reasons. At length, in October 1622, having become weary of the continual accusations preferred against him by

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Duke, and apparently partly credited by the president at Bantam, though made by a man who desired to supplant his superior, Methwold resigned his position as agent at Masulipatam and left for Bantam to represent his own case. Failing to obtain satisfaction, he decided to quit the service and return to England. On arrival he came before the directors, who noted that

"Concerning Mr. Methwold wee finde all particulars in his accompts correct and himself to bee a man of such sufficiency (ability) in your affaires, thatt we hartilie wishe your displeasure were nott the cawse of his return, for his absence from the charge hee was imploied in will much prejudice your affaires. For Mr. Duke we censure him for his humerous (splenetic) usuadge of Mr. Methwold whom bye all accompts he hath most intolerably injured. He is a man unknowne to us not more than three dayes but seminge in this small experience to be on an unconstant and peevish disposition." Duke was dismissed, and it is rather amusing to read in his acknowledgment that "I was verie werie of India for the intolerable vices of the English therin for alle your servantes are verie wicked."

Apparently annoyed at his general treatment, Methwold refused to accept a reappointment, and, for the next nine years, engaged himself in business in London. In January 1633 news of the very serious illness of President Rastell at Surat reached the Company in London, and, nothing doubting but that by that time he was dead, the Company sought for a successor. Eventually the appointment was offered to Methwold, "who beeing well inclined to accept the imployment soe honourably offered, and most kindly treated in all respects," agreed to accept it, and, having done so, embarked at Gravesend on the 23rd March 1633.

The fleet was composed of the *Discovery*, the *Palsgrave*, and the *Reformation*, the combined cargoes amounting to £19,000 in goods, with £61,000 in specie,

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which shows how valuable the Company's exports were, all of which were paid for in coin brought out from home. After a voyage attended by the usual heavy mortality and sickness, the fleet arrived at Swally on the 4th November 1633, and Methwold landed under a salute of nine guns. In his first letter home he remarks that the "present distracted state of India I find to be much worse than was even feared in England. It will give more trouble and require more care than ever before." Which was correct.

A later letter remarks on the dangers attending the passage of goods and merchandise from the up-country factories to Surat owing to the prevailing famine, and the many bands of roving robbers which infested the routes between those places and Surat. Methwold writes: "You are not sufficiently informed of the dangers which accompany your cafilas (caravans) in all their wayes, during these desperate tymes when want makes men more desperate, and resolute than their natural disposition. Your cafila from Cambaya was assaulted nere that place, butt in that case the theeves were repulsed without any loss. But between Baroch and Suratt another cafila was assaulted where one Englishman, was soe sorely wounded thatt he dyed three dayes later.

"Even here on shoare in the midway between Swally and Suratt the cart which carried 63,000 mahmudies for the latter place was sett upon by the Rajputts and with only the death of one black mann whom they slewe with a speare, they carried all the money" (£3150). Though a few years later, we might here insert two other attacks on caravans, just to show what dangers these old-time merchants encountered and how they met their deaths on occasion.

John Turner writes:

"February 3 1637. Wee departed from Brodera not much after midnight and made oure halt at Karvan.

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The next day verie earlie wee departinge thence arrived at Herondale, about tenn of the clocke, where making verie littel staye wee proceded. But it soe happened that the caphila being cart after cart with 120 paeons, or therabouts, attending itt were after about one mile most furiously sett upon by 400 Rashpootes horse and foote which made Abel Druce and Walter Kidlie hasten to the further end of the caphila leaving mee to guard the van. Their the souldiers, according to their generall costome in any eminent perill for the most part forsaking them left both of them to confront the enemie alone, and to expend their last breath which was there expired through multiplicity of wounds received.

"The Caphila in the menetyme I led forward with all hast, but could nott perswade the souldiers that were with mee to bring up the reare. They, with divers of the carters and oxen forsooke the Caphila leavinge 61 carts to the mercy of the enemie, which they tayken goode part of though levinge diverse cartes of goods which I have broughte awaye. Messrs. Druce and Kidlie we have enterred at Baroch as best wee coulde."

MR. DRAKE'S CAFILA

A few weeks later another attack upon a cafila near Agra cost the life of John Drake, an old and able servant of the Company, who, tragically enough, had just been promoted to a much superior post he was proceeding to join. He was bringing down a cargo of indigo to Surat, and, being the only European with the cafila, the following report was sent in by the native broker Dhanji, apparently a Parsee.

"I accompanied Mr. Drake from Agra with 62 carts. Havinge past the Chambal river wee came to a village of which the inhabitants demanded a toll wiche wee refusing, they lett the cafila pass deteyning only the last two carts defended by our paeons with bowes and

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arrowes. Our paeons resisting the stoppage the Gowars (villagers) mayde a hubbub att the wiche hearinge came running some 300 more armed with gunns drawn swordes bowes and speares. Our paeons seeing the Gowars come thus armed, they alsoe drewe their swordes. Then insomuche seeing our paeons soe fewe and all in danger of beeinge slaughtered I putt myself into the Gowar's hands to quiet their rage.

"John Drake heringe of the trouble, he returned from the front and was presently encompassed by the Gowars which, putting spurs to his horse he brake through and went further off to the cafila. About 200 Gowars made after him and began a skirmish whearein Mr. Drake was shott through with an arrowe, which entring att his backe pierced through to his belley. Which soe dismayd oure paeons that they ran away and left the carts to the Gowars whom notwithstanding, riffled them nott, taking only the clothes of the paeons thatt were upon the cartes.

"Then went I to Mr. Drake whom I found weltring in his blood and taking up putt him upon a cott and came to Dholpore in the midday. About midnight hee became verie ill, and telling mee his life was at an end desired mee to write down what hee shoulde saye which I did in the Industan language. Wherunto he signed and after two gurres (forty minutes) departed this lyfe. Soe wee tooke his bodie to Agra in a palankeene which the Padrees (priests) had sent and advised the Hollanders of the death of Mr. Drake." They buried him in their garden, where he still lies, his tomb having been made a protected monument. It was erected ten years later by our old friend Edward Knipe, who, curiously enough, had just before very bravely defended his own cafila against a similar attack by "60 Rashpoote horse, and 2000 foote," whom he drove off without the loss of a man, though losing a few carts deserted by their drivers.

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Such days were, indeed, eventful enough for the trader merchant. Contrast them with the present when such men may spend thirty years in Indian service and see little more than their home, their business and club-houses, and the landscape they see from the windows of their luxurious railway coach.

The ravages of the famine so casually alluded to by Methwold are thus described by a Dutch merchant. Such an account serves to show that, despite what perfervid Indians prate, famine in India is not due to the rule of the English.

THE FAMINE OF 1634

"December 29th 1634. The artificers and mechanics of all sorts are dead, or fled in miserie famine having forced them from their habitations. If the excessive covetousness and tyranny of the Governors would but give these poor people leave to lift up their heads by but one year's vacancy from oppression they could keep cattle and so advance the plenty which the earth may produce. . . . Near Swally we saw manie people thatt had perished of hunger. Out of 260 families of this place there are but ten or eleven alive remayning. Going thence to Surat we saw manie dead bodis bye the way, consuming themselves (rotting) there being none to burie them remayning.

"When wee came into the Citie of Suratt wee colde hardlie see anie living person where formerly had been manie thowsands, the dead, men women and children lyinge att the corner of the streets heaped one upon the other, to the number of twenty deep. There hath dyed not less than 30,000 in this citie alone. Of the English factors there are dyed eleven and of the Dutch three. In these parts no trade can be expected the next three yeres. No man can goe intoe the strretes but must resolve to give great alms or be murthered for the

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people all crie in a lowd voyse, 'Give us sustenance or kill us.'"

MR. METHWOLD AS PRESIDENT

One of the first measures taken by Methwold after his assumption of office was to endeavour to come to some agreement with the Portuguese to end the marine and commercial warfare waged by both since the coming of the English to Surat. Though infinitely more damaging to the Portuguese than to the English, there was the danger of so weakening the former as to render them an easier prey to the Dutch who, after the Portuguese were entirely ruined, would turn their attention to the English solely.

For a long time negotiations had been proceeding with the final result that on the 6th January 1635 Methwold arrived at Goa to discuss the terms already tentatively put forward. The whole proceedings are so old-worldly picturesque that we make this our reason for giving a condensed account, the original being very prolix.

"January the 6th 1635. This morning we had sight of Goa Rode where we found riding six galleons and two Caracks and had presentlie aboarde visitants from the Viceroy to bid us welcome and invitation to come to an anchor within the galleons under safeguard of the castle. Which wee refused at first, but the next day the *Hopewell* and the *Intelligence* went in and tooke off soe muche of the suspition which they conceved wee had of their sincerity of safe conduct. When wee approached within a good shott of their Admirall wee stroke our topsailes, and tooke in our flaggs which they did aboarde theire owne shipps at the same instant.

"Then the *Palsgrave* saluted them with nine peece of ordnance the *Jonah* seven, the *Hopewell* five the pinnace three which was ansered from all their ships

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without order or number. At oure cominge to anchor we saluted the port with 21 peeces of ordnance from the *Palsgrave*, and the rest in proportion which were ansered from the castles on all sides and from the ships and caracks in the road past any accunt from them, though wee believe yow will find it a large one in your gunners stores. On the Wednesday the Viceroies sonne Don Ferdinando accompanied with the Councillors of State for the Indies embarqued in the State Galley and came neare unto the barre, riding nere the caracks.

"Untoe whome we sent of oure barge excusinge oure grete ships nott coming in and resenting (appreciating) their great trouble in cominge soe farre. Which message they apprehended well and presently came the Veadore de Fazendo, one of the Counsell and an officer of great trust and imployment. Hime we againe welcomed with ordnance, and presentlie after, as many as pretended toe this business prepared ourselves in our best equipage to go ashore. And now againe the ships of both nations shott no small nomber of ordinance withe all the castles thatt were within sight or heringe.

"Beeing come to shore the Viceroies guard with the Captaines mett us at the landing, and from the waterside to the house accompanied us, wee at the right hand of the President, to oure lodging. The house is a stately one well furnisht, oure dyett plentifull with an abundance of goodly plate the care of oure entertaynment committed to persons of great quality wherin wee could wishe they *had been less officious* (simple soul). The next daye wee presented his Majesty's commission and . . . haveinge agreed upon the forme of the agreement came to the Viceroie to observe them by signing and sweringe therto.

"Beeing imbarqued, the gally first, and then all the castles discharge their ordinance, and when wee came into the towne seven more were soe discharged. And soe landing at the Viceroie's pallace wee mounted untoe

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the hight thereof by manie degrees, and were brought to his presence where he lay in upon his bedd, having been let blood seven times within the passed four or five daies. . . . ."

Here follow the terms of the treaty, which was formally ratified by the home Government and the King of England, thus making the Portuguese our oldest ally in Europe or Asia.

"On Saturday wee all prepared to take our leaves of the Viceroie. But, before wee colde bee redy, the Veadore de Fazendo came aboard the *Palsgrave*, and in the name of the Viceroie presented to the King's Most Excellent Majestie one hundred fardles of cinnamon for his kitchen, and a faire chaine of gold weighinge 39 Rs. rials of eight for your President."

So ended this important mission.

The next matter of importance was the bold stand made by Methwold against the preposterous attempts of the Governor of Surat to bleed both the Dutch and English companies. Here again let him speak for himself.

". . . My self and the Dutch were summoned before the Governor, who, before a full company of Moores, did enjoyne that we severally should deposit alwaies 12 lakhes of roupies heere in Suratt, thatt wee should alwaies remayne in Suratt without permission to goe aboard oure ships at anie tyme (for England) nor should we resort to anie other part of his territories at anie tyme. With muche more such ridiculous stuffe that I forbeare to write.

"To which I replied stoutly that on behalfe of the English nacion, I did utterly reject the conditions, as haveinge an agreement and priveleges of almost 30 years, and I would nott now submitt to suche slavery. I professed myself a free man and subject onlie to the Kinge of England, noe slave to this, nor layable to these commaunds; insoemuch thatt I left them with

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much discontent." No more was heard of the conditions. But all that Methwold had hitherto endured was trivial to what was now to come in the repercussion of the piracies of Cobb and Ayres on the trade of the Company and the want of confidence in British integrity that they naturally engendered. Not only that, but for a while the destruction of trade and profit involved still further harassed Methwold in his endeavours on behalf of his masters. The greatest difficulty of all which this extraordinary and immoral happening produced was the enmity, the secret enmity which his integrity and care for the Company's interests produced in Royal and influential circles. This is not the place to tell the story of Cobb and Ayres, which belongs to the history of sheer unadulterated piracy. His Majesty, Charles I, and his advisers, hopelessly short of cash, empowered these two worthies to "range the world all over and make prize of such treasure of any prince or potentaat, not in amitye with us." They were allowed to sail under the Royal Ensign, and in 1634 set out for the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, the *Samaritan* of 250 tons and twenty guns, the *Roebuck*, 100 tons and ten guns. They sailed in great secrecy lest the East India Company should get an estoppel against them, and once they got into the Indian Ocean, disregarded the Company's authorities, raided, robbed and raped all and sundry, fought with the Company's skippers whom Methwold sent against them, thereby incurring the intense secret enmity aforesaid in the highest circles, and generally told all and sundry that they were Royal ships and the Company but a pack of traders.[1] Methwold's troubles with them need not be enumerated. They were very

[1] Though Cobb and Ayres eventually landed up in Rochester Jail, no case was preferred against them and they were released, having feathered their nest with a considerable share of the Royal spoil.

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serious, and caused him great chagrin and anxiety in his work of establishing the Company's prosperity and prestige. Happily he survived anxieties, fever, and fluxes, eventually returning to live in the odour of high esteem at Kensington, where he founded benevolences and homes, some of which endured until 1865, when they were swept away to make room for the underground railway. Soon after his return Methwold was elected a member of committee, and continued as such until March 1643, when he was elected Deputy Governor, to which post he was re-elected year after year until he died. In December 1649 he was offered the post of Ambassador at the Court of Spain, an offer he declined, as he did that of a similar position at Constantinople in 1651.

To the end he remained in harness, dying at Hale House in the Cromwell Road on the 5th March 1653. He was given a great farewell by his colleagues of the Court of Directors, most of whom, with thousands of others, attended his interment in Kensington Church five days later.

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CHAPTER XIV

EARLY DAYS IN CALCUTTA AND PEGU

THE FOUNDING OF CALCUTTA (1636)—AFTER THE BLACK HOLE (1757)
—THE MASSACRE AT NEGRAIS (1759)

THE FOUNDING OF CALCUTTA (1636)

In the early hours of a July morning of the year 1690 a string of country boats crept slowly up the Hughli and moored to the bank of the river, just where it was fringed by the squalid and straggling native village Chatunati. Foremost was a large roofed-in budgeerow, at whose stumpy mast-head fluttered the Union flag of North and South Britain, and at her stern the red and white barred flag of the East India Company, with the Red Cross of England in the upper canton.

At the prow, stolidly waiting for the gang to connect with that shore to which he was returning for the final settlement, stood a lean and grizzled Englishman nearing his sixth decade. Despite the damply sweltering heat of one of those Bengal mornings that bleach the face and soften the fibre of the Englishman, Job Charnock, was garbed, as was then but customary with senior factors, in a style befitting his dignity, though recking not of comfort, and could he but have known it, befitting the momentous occasion of the first footing on the site of Calcutta.

Here, then, is his costume, as taken from the veracious pages and the quaint illustrations of Baldeous, depicting a factor of Surat in the year 1686. His head is crowned by a wide-brimmed, low-crowned beaver hat encircled by a lace band, and further adorned by a

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white ostrich feather curling over the brim beneath which grizzled though scanty locks depend to his shoulders. Around his neck is a broad, falling collar tied in front by Geneva bands falling low on the breast of a long-skirted cassock-like coat, adorned by many pearl buttons mounted in gold, reaching to the knees.

The full-shouldered sleeves are turned back high above the wrists to show billowing lawn shirt-sleeves ending in a ruffled frill. Beneath the knee-low skirts show the ends of baggy purple velvet breeches tied below the knee with broad blue ribbons, whose ends hang low over the stockings of ash-coloured silk, continued into low-quartered, broad-toed shoes of red Spanish leather, fastened over a high fan-shaped tongue by strap and silver buckle. Though a man of peaceful occupation, dignity compels the silver-handled rapier, supported in a many-buckled frog, that projects through a wide slit in the left skirt of the coat, as it does the sworded halberdier and the musketeer with clumsy weapon who closely follow the roundel bearer.

Cautiously, as befits his age, he descends the smoothly scoured plank to the river-bank to enter a palanquin, in which, followed by his factors and merchants in degree of importance and guarded by "Fourty English souldiers, armed with pike and caliver, and sixty burkandaz" headed by drum and trumpet, he is borne in slow state to the wide-spreading pipul tree, beneath which await his coming the zemindar and a crowd of awed villagers, who receive him with fitting ceremony and low salaams. Then, amid reverential silence the *Fărmān* from the mighty Subah of Bengal sanctioning purchase of the three villages is read and acknowledged. The Patriarch of the Calcutta is offered the inevitable attar and pan which, with the ease and dignity born of decades of life and social intercourse with Indians, he accepts.

Such, then, was the ceremony, if so it could be

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called when none was intended, of the founding of Calcutta. For a long time the founder and his immediate successors must have led an extremely simple life, devoid of most of the comforts and even of the necessaries indispensable in other parts of India at the time. Their first dwellings were of grass, soon, however, to be superseded by *kutcha* (mud brick) bungalows built beneath a shady tope or surrounded by plantations of those shade trees which spring up with bewildering rapidity in the humid climate of Bengal.

As time progressed these humble dwellings were replaced by large houses, with dwelling apartments raised high on arches and attained by a double-winged stairway in the front of the building, the landing of which formed the roof of the portico. Even to this day this type of building survives in old, and now deserted, cantonments and stations, from which the military tide has long since ebbed away to the far north, leaving their dwellings and those of their civil congeners, in some cases, still standing, to testify how men built in the days when service in India was a life's task, not a year's long burden, as now.

In these early days the merchant, when not abroad, garbed himself in the easy style of the natives, and furnished his house in like manner. The reception-room was simply furnished with large, bolster-like cushions scattered over the white cloth covered matting that covered the floor, for though our merchant dealt in Oriental carpets, he did not cumber his dwelling with these floor coverings whose beauty was discounted by their warmth and insect-sheltering defects. Around the walls ran a raised divan of more snowy cushions, with perchance a chair or two for the merchant and a specially honoured guest. As a general rule chairs and tables were confined to the dining-room or the counting-house.

Here the merchant took his ease, more often than

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not in the company of a brown beauty, or maybe more than one; for dress and furniture were not the only Oriental customs in the home until the warning shout from the Burkandaz below of "Bahar ka Sahib aya"[1] caused a fluttering flight, amid giggling whispers of the "household." But it was seldom that even the most intimate of friends was permitted to enter the house, those who came on business being entertained in the counting-house below, and those on social intercourse intent, in a *shamiana*[2]-covered *chabutra*,[3] where, over their sack or canary or a bowl of fiery punch, they gossiped over local events, discussed their friends or associates or speculated on the news from home or the cargo to be brought by the fleet now at the Sand-heads after a seven months' voyage from home.

To these subjects might be added the possibility of shooting one of the buffalo or tiger which occasionally visited the jungle of Chowringhi, behind Govindpore, or the deer or pig so plentiful therein, or the leopard which occasionally prowled around the outer dwellings at night, sometimes to carry away the watchdog of the sahib, who slept beneath the stars, the dog beside his bed. As time went on the amenities necessary to the health and comfort of the Englishman improved. At first larder supplies were limited to poultry of the village variety or to kid and goat mutton with the mushy local vegetables as a staple, varied by salt beef, pork, or bacon landed from the ships, or pork shot in the island of Ingelle or the jungles that covered the modern site of the Esplanade, the Maidan, and the whole of the country up to Dharamtolla and towards the Circular Road and Bhowanipore.

The commonest liquors were punch and wine, the latter imported, and to which a kindly captain might, if his store was plentiful, add an occasional cask of English beer or Bavarian Mum (strong beer). All were

[1] A visitor. [2] Awning. [3] Platform.

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consumed in great quantities, as bears witness the factory records and the testimony of Bernier and Hamilton, who aver that organised drinking bouts, lasting days, were frequently organised to kill leisure and often some of the contestants. Bernier gives us the receipt for punch as composed of arrack, black sugar (gur), muscadine or canary with lime juice and water, "pleasant enough to the taste but a plague to the body and health."

Hamilton remarks that the English, "having found Bordeaux, Canary, and Shiraz (Persian) wines a marvellous antidote against ill air, applied themselves to it plentifully, in consequence of which they have not now so much sickness," an assertion discounted by the fact he himself quotes, that between August 1705 and February 1706, 450 Europeans out of 1200 then in Calcutta or on the ships in the river, died from various causes.

Of these, most of the mariners, unless of high degree, were probably cast into the river with a 24-lb. shot sewn up in their hammocks. The others were interred in the cemetery, which then stood without the boundary of the settlement, but is now almost covered by St. John's Cathedral and its churchyard. It was then separated by a tract of waste land, where was cast the refuse of the city and the dead bodies of animals to be disposed of by the legions of foul birds, then the sole general scavengers of old Calcutta.

There moulders, among others less known, Job Charnock, that half-Hinduised old Englishman, whose foresight and tenacity of purpose induced him, after two previous brave if unsuccessful attempts, to secure that site whereon the greatest and wealthiest city of the East now stands. To the dweller in Calcutta, as of Christopher Wren and St. Paul's, may it be well said: *Si monumentum requiris, Circumspice.*

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AFTER THE BLACK HOLE (1757)

When the traveller of olden days, who had journeyed below the equinoctial line to the gorgeous Orient or the golden Occident, sat himself down to chronicle his experiences for the benefit of posterity, or maybe, with a trifling thought for his own pleasure and profit, he did so with a fitting sense of the importance of his task, the general result being weighty both in matter and volume. A conducing factor, it is true, was that in those days books were but as the dew of the morning to a monsoon shower compared to modern times, so your infrequent reader demanded ample value in quantity and quality for his prior subscription.

These combined factors produced volumes that in very truth were "ponderous tomes," some of which, as, for instance, the Travels of Baldeous, Stavorinus, Valantijn, and especially Harris, are a hefty task to handle. Of the latter, in five volumes, each measures seventeen inches by twelve inches wide and four and a half thick, in illustrations and letterpress, to which is added a binding of solid leather stretched on thick cardboard. If, however, there was generosity in size, it was equalled by the workmanship of the printer and draughtsman, who gave of their very best in paper and craftsmanship.

Though over two hundred years have passed over many of the volumes still extant, the print is in most cases almost as jetty as the day it was impressed on the finest of hand-made linen paper. The craftsman, however, was perhaps at his best in the maps and illustrations, most of which are quaint in conception, meticulous in execution, and, in the pictorial filling and adornment, microscopic in size and detail. Here is no base mechanic's work, for one can picture the draughtsman, no mean artist, lingering lovingly over his task and neglecting nothing in skill or time to make it perfect.

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Let us look at a map of the West African coast made in the year 1705, a period when but the fringe of coast was known, and that only to merchants and mariners. Lacking the knowledge the draughtsman or cartographer has indulged his skill and beautified his work by adorning the wide black spaces of sea and land with exquisite thumbnail sketches of birds, beasts, fishes, and ships. Away from the coast steer tall ships, all sail set alow and aloft, bellying to the offshore breeze and colours streaming out from mast-heads and jack-staff.

Though but half an inch in length and the merest fraction more in height, every detail of the quaint, high-sterned, low-bowed, full-rigged ships, even to the pattern of her flag and the tiny gun-muzzles peeping through the portholes, ten in number, can be made out with the unaided eye. As they sail the ocean we see spouting whales, all head and tail, gambolling dolphins, and fearsome sea-serpents with shaggy heads and manes convoluting their dread way to the tall ships bound on their mysterious voyages, maybe to those Islands of the Blest, where sky and land meet and man, beast and fish are at everlasting peace.

As generously does the cartographer endow the great unknown tracts of the interior with tiny, quarter-inch sketches of roaming lions, elephants, hippopotami, and fighting buffaloes, each minutely perfect and separated by legends that "Here be great wild forests," "here be wide deserts wherein are savage man-eating tribes," "here is gold," "here be the Mountains of the Moon," or "the land of Prester John," and others, bringing the desire of travel and adventure to the youth who might pore over them.

Most entrancing of all are title-plates born of a delicate fancy, an artistic delight and a love of childhood, for most frequently these are supported or adorned by chubby cherubs, winged, or toddlingly wingless, and all alike with the appealing smile or wide-eyed

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absorbedness of the infant. The title-plates of this very map are surmounted by a round-topped, brass-bound, open-lidded treasure chest, from which a pair of chubby little blackamoors are drawing forth strings of pearls and other jewels, to be thrown down amongst the heap of golden goblets, massy chains, and bracelets that lie above a pile of doubloons or zecchins.

Another plate gives us a pair of winged cherubs at work on the scale shown as engraved on the section of a tropical jungle, one wielding a pair of compasses as large as himself and the other tensely handling the measuring chain, his wings outspread to the straining effort.

Amongst the author's bookish treasures, in which, incidentally, figures the book-plate of Sir John Chicheley of Wantage in the County of Bucks, is a weighty volume written by Edward Ives, surgeon, in the year 1773. Through what hands and adventures this book had passed since it left the knightly library until rescued from a *kabari's* shop in the Anarkali Bazaar of Lahore we are never likely to know, much as we should desire to. Within the covers are set down, at great length, and with many sage aphorisms and philosophical reflections, what he had seen or heard during his period of duty as a naval surgeon with Admiral Watson, who, with Lord Clive, arrived at Calcutta soon after the tragedy of the Black Hole and rescued the city from Surajah Dowlah.

Of the survivors of the Black Hole the learned doctor writes:

"On the 14th of December 1756 we had the satisfaction to arrive at Fulta. The reader may perhaps better construe than I can express, what welcome visitors we were to our distressed countrymen, who, after having lived in the most affluent of circumstances were now sunk to a condition that admitted scarcely of common necessaries. The cup of affliction is always bitter, but has the taste of gall itself, when it so suddenly

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succeeds a state of opulence. To sink at once into the lowest poverty from easy fortune, and from a condition that drew respect from others to be reduced to one too often attended with derision and contempt, are circumstances that quicken the sense of misery and make misfortune more intolerable.

"... These poor people, who had escaped from the dreadful catastrophe of the Black Hole, had made their escape to Fulta, a despicable hole on the river side, and were living, some in tents on shore, and some in the vessels in which they had escaped from Calcutta. They were crowded together, clad in the meanest of apparel, and were obliged to descend to the most servile of offices, and to be dependant on the commiseration of others for the most bare subsistence. Yet, when we saw them, to our surprise, they appeared to keep a cheerful countenance, as if no great misfortune had overtaken them."

Leaving the surgeon to his moralising over the survivors and the victims of the Black Hole, we pass on to his account of the single-handed capture of the Fort of Budge Budge, by a drunken seaman from the fleet, an incident we leave him to narrate in his own quaint style.

"... The guns of the Fort, having been silenced by the fire of the *Tyger*, and the ships of the squadron, but the garrison not offering to surrender, and keeping up a discharge of fire arrows, it was decided that Colonel Clive should take it by assault at dawn next morning, and at five o'clock of the evening forty sailors of each ship were sent ashore to assist Colonel Clive, all of whom, when assembled, were directed to sit on the ground until the appointed time. All was quiet in the camp, but suddenly a loud, and universal acclamation was heard from the shore, and soon afterwards an account was brought to the Admiral that the Fort was taken by surprise.

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"This was a joyful piece of news, but, when the circumstances that ushered in this success were related, our exultation was greatly bated, because we found that the rules, so indispensably necessary in all military exploits had been entirely disregarded in the present instance, so, therefore, could not help looking on the person who had taken the principal hand in this business of victory as rather an object for chastisement than for applause. The case was this:

"One Strahan, a common sailor, belonging to the *Kent*, having just been served with a quantity of grog, had his spirits so elevated to much to think of taking any rest. He, therefore, strayed towards the fort, and imperceptibly got under the walls. Being advanced thus far without interruption, he took it into his head to scale a breach made by the ships cannon, and having luckily gotten upon the bastion, he there discovered several Moormen sitting on the platform. At this he flourished his cutlass, and fired his pistols, and after giving three loud cheers cried out, 'The place is mine.'

"The Moorish (Mussulman) soldiers immediately attacked him, and, he defended himself with incomparable resolution, but, in the rencontre, had the misfortune to have the blade of his cutlass cut in two about a foot from the hilt. However, this mischance did not happen until he was supported by two, or three other sailors who had accidentally straggled to the same part of the Fort. They, on hearing Strahans huzzas, immediately scaled the breach likewise, and echoing the triumphant sound, roused the whole army, who presently fell on pellmell, and without discipline following the pernicious example of the sailors.

"This attack, though in confusion was attended by no other misfortune than the death of the worthy Captain Dugald Campbell who was unfortunately killed by a musket bullett from one of our own pieces during the general confusion. There were in this fort

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18 pieces of cannon and forty barrels of powder with considerable other munitions and stores. Strahan, the hero of this adventurous action was soon brought before the Admiral, who, notwithstanding the success attending it, thought it necessary to shew himself displeased with a measure in which the want of all military order, and discipline appeared. He, therefore angrily enquired into the desperate step which he had taken, saying:

"'Mr. Strahan, what is this you have been doing?' The fellow, having made his bow, scratched his head, and with one hand twirling his hat, on the other, replied:

"'Why, to be sure, sir, it was I who took the Fort, but I hope there was no harm in it!'

"The Admiral was, with difficulty prevented from smiling at the simplicity of Strahan's answer, and the whole company was exceedingly diverted with his awkward appearance, and his language and manner, in recounting the several particulars of the mad exploit. Mr. Watson (the Admiral) expatiated largely on the fatal consequences that might have attended such irregular conduct, and then, with a severe rebuke, dismissed, but not before he had given the fellow some distant hints that, at a proper opportunity, he should be rewarded for his temerity.

"Strahan, amazed to find himself blamed, where he had expected reward, was no sooner gone from the Admirals cabin than he muttered these words:

"'If I am to be flogged for this here action, I will never take another fort by myself, so long as I live.'

"The novelty of the case, the success of the enterprise, and the courageous spirit of the offender pleaded strongly with the Admiral, yet at the same time, the exigencies of the service required that he should exhibit some outward marks of displeasure. This the Admiral did for some time, but afterwards, at the intercession of some officers, which he himself prompted, Strahan,

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was most readily pardoned. Nay it is not improbable, that, had Strahan been properly qualified for the office of boatswain, he might, on some pretence, or other, have been promoted to that office in one of his Majesty's ships.

"But, unfortunately for this brave fellow, the whole tenor of his conduct, both before and after the storming of the fort was so very irregular as to render impossible advance from his original station to higher rank, no matter how strongly his inclination let him to desire it. . . . Since these sheets were sent to the press, Strahan has paid the author a visit, and told him that he served in every one of Admiral Pococks eastern engagements, in one of which he received a wound, in consequence of which he is now a pensioner to the Chest at Chatham.

"At present he also acts as a sailor on one of the guard ships at Plymouth and he says that his dearest wish is to become cook on one of His Majesty's capital ships."

Whether Strahan ever achieved his ambition we cannot ascertain, but in view of the surgeon's kindly interest and his unique action, it is quite probable that he did. Before parting with Surgeon Ives and his reminiscences we might explain two references above made.

The Chatham Chest was instituted in the time of Charles II for awarding small pensions to disabled seamen or men incapacitated after long and good service. It was maintained by deductions from the pay of the seamen, and prize money, added to a none too munificent grant from the royal exchequer. When service in the navy became continuous the fund was taken over by the Treasury, but for many years a portion was reserved to add to the pensions of specially deserving men who had attained the age of sixty. The Chatham Chest, like the Greenwich Hospital Pensions, still remains in modern form.

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The fire arrows were as old as the time of Elizabeth and were wooden or steel shafts wrapped with oil-soaked tow and discharged from muskets, the idea being to explode loose powder. How effective they might be is shown by the fact that at the taking of Chandernagore a whole platoon of the 39th Foot were killed or wounded by the powder in their pouches being exploded by one of these contrivances.

THE MASSACRE AT NEGRAIS (1759)

To most, even casual, readers of the story of the English in India, the tragedies of the Black Hole of Calcutta and of Patna are known. Yet there are others equally tragic, though lacking in magnitude, that, though long forgotten, may be interesting to the heirs of the merchant venturers who have succeeded to what their forerunners gave their living years and died a cruel death to found and foster.

Near the mouth of the Irrawaddy River lies the small island of Negrais, first mentioned by Ralph Fitch, who passed by it in the year 1586, and gives it as "lying tenn dayes from the City of Pegu, by the riveres," which sufficiently indicates its position. In the year 1626 the Dutch established a trading station on the island, an example followed by their English rivals three years later. But owing to the exactions of the Burmese officials, and little trade offering, both nations abandoned the island in 1636. It remained neglected by both until 1687, when another factory was established, which endured until 1746. From that date, owing to its losses by peculation, and private trade by the staff there, the Company ceased operations, though leaving their buildings standing.

Having leased the island from Alompra, the Burmese ruler, in 1757, they once more reopened the establishment, only, owing to trouble in Bengal, to remove

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again the majority of the European staff, in the year 1759. Those remaining on the island were some half-dozen minor Europeans and about two hundred Bengalis and men of mixed breeds who had come over with the various occupations and made their home on the island. For the protection of the island and factory from the Arracan pirates and Burmese marauders, the Company had subsidised about one hundred and fifty soldiers from Alompra, under command of a renegade Frenchman named Le Vigne, the sole survivor of a trading mission from France to Alompra, all of whom, with the exception mentioned, who had saved his life by becoming a renegade, had been massacred by him. Le Vigne was now in high favour with Alompra.

By the end of 1759 matters in Bengal had so far improved that more factors could be spared, with whom it was decided to reopen the factory to its full extent, so, in November of that year, Messrs. Southby and Hope sailed from Calcutta in the *Victoria Snow* (a small square-rigged, two-masted vessel). But, during the temporary cessation of English trading activities at Negrais, from which they traded into the adjacent country, a sinister influence, malign to their lives and interests, had been at work, and a plot for the destruction of the factory and the massacre of the staff worked out.

The fomenters of the plot were the Armenian merchants of Burma and Arracan, who had long enjoyed a monopoly of a lucrative trade they found threatened by the renewed activities of the English to be continued on a larger scale. The principal mover in the conspiracy is described as "the leader of a community, who are the Jews of the East, faithless, and intriguing though of an indefatigueable industry, seconded by a competent energy. The chief personage amongst them was Cogia Gregory, a man of immense wealth, and great ability."

By means well known to all having knowledge of

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Asiatic courts of those days, they managed to convince Alompra that the English from Bengal were selling arms to the rebels in Arracan, and those at Negrais levying a toll on the country ships touching at Negrais, which they appropriated, to his loss. By these and other just as false statements Cogia Gregory and Cogia Pochas ultimately succeeded in so discrediting the English at Negrais that an order for their expulsion and the confiscation of their property on the island was issued.

More than this Alompra did not intend. But the Armenian leaders reasoned that a massacre of the English at Negrais would commit Alompra to hostility against the English, and also deter them from any further attempts at trade with Burma and Arracan. To this end they secretly intrigued with Le Vigne, who was heavily bribed to massacre the unsuspecting Englishmen and persuaded that he could excuse the outrage by alleging armed resistance to expulsion on their part. Certain of the Asiatic staff were also brought into the plot with the object of keeping them from warning their masters of any suspicious circumstances, amongst whom was the Portuguese or Goanese interpreter, Rodriguez, a man high in the confidence of the English on Negrais.

Late in the afternoon of the 15th November 1759 the *Victoria* arrived at Negrais after a very stormy passage across the Bay of Bengal. As she was very leaky and uncomfortable the factors, late as it was, decided to disembark at once, and, on doing so, were effusively greeted by the arch-traitors, Rodriguez and Le Vigne, by whom their invitation to breakfast next day was accepted. The quarters of the European staff were in a large, two-storied building, the upper part of which was occupied by the principals and the lower by ten more Englishmen of the writer and stevedore classes.

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Punctually at nine next morning Le Vigne and the interpreter arrived attended by a rabble of armed men, whom they represented as a kind of guard of honour, thus disarming any suspicion that might have arisen. Both were invited upstairs, where the factors breakfasted alone, and the meal commenced and continued in perfect confidence on the one side and apparent amity on the other. Half-way through, Le Vigne made an excuse to quit the room. A moment later he rushed in at the head of a tumultuous crowd of ruffians, by whom Hope and Southby were decapitated and cut to pieces.

Simultaneously another party attacked the Englishmen in the lower story of the house, and in the first surprise cut down and decapitated five of them before the survivors could get to their arms and drive them out, after which they barricaded themselves in, and held out against continual attacks. Meanwhile another surprise and massacre had almost been consummated on the *Shaftesbury*, a vessel which, through stress of weather, had put into the harbour late the previous night. Her arrival had somewhat disconcerted the conspirators, but being men of resource they soon evolved a scheme to meet the altered conditions.

No firing had taken place, and as the factory building was some four hundred yards from the beach, no sound of the struggle was to be heard when the *Shaftesbury's* boat arrived with the mate, who had been sent ashore to ascertain when the factors would find it convenient to interview the captain, as was customary, though only a matter of courtesy. Not a soul was visible at the beach, and, though probably wondering at this, the mate landed alone and walked up to the house. The Burmans, who had seen the boat put off, stayed their attack on the men barricaded in the other end of the house, and crowding on either side of the door prepared a welcome for the unsuspecting mate.

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Their very numbers and eagerness proved his safety, for they so impeded each other that the mate escaped with a spear-thrust through his arm from the doorway, and, closely pursued, managed to gain the boat and tumble into it. However, as he did so, another spear struck into his back, from the effect of which he shortly died. Foiled in the surprise, Le Vigne left the attack on the house to a select band, and, with the remainder, opened fire from the ten-gun battery which commanded the harbour.

He had served as a gunner in the French Navy, and had trained his Burmans, the result being that the first intimation of hostility received by the *Shaftesbury* was a salvo which hulled her in several places and badly damaged her upper works and rigging. In a short time, however, her guns were run out, and for the remainder of the forenoon an artillery duel was waged between ship and shore. Then any Burmans not besieging the house or manning the batteries raged through the Indian settlement and killed every man, woman and child they could find, looting their houses and the factory warehouse and loading their plunder into boats, unhampered by the *Shaftesbury*, which was fully occupied with the shore battery.

The fire from the shore ultimately brought down the foremast of the ship and so badly damaged her rigging and mainmast that she decided to get away whilst still seaworthy, and, about three in the afternoon, followed the *Victoria*, which, being unarmed, had already departed to sea, leaving the unfortunates barricaded in the house to their fate. The *Shaftesbury* had dismounted two guns in the shore battery and killed some twenty of the gunners, losing herself three men killed and six wounded. The reason she adduced for leaving the unfortunates ashore to the mercy of the Burmans and the renegade Le Vigne, was that her crew was not strong enough to send a party to their relief nor to

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repel the boatloads of Burmans they saw putting off to cut the ship off.

The departure of the ships was announced to the besieged survivors, who had now obtained firearms, by which they had killed a number of the besiegers. Le Vigne himself now appeared, and, on his promise of their lives being spared, the men came out and gave up their arms. No sooner had they done so than they were set upon with bamboo staves and so severely beaten that they were unable to walk. One of them, a merchant named Briggs, was finished off with a spear thrust, and the survivors, four in number only, were carried down to the boats and taken prisoners to Pegu.

The next morning the *Shaftesbury*, having repaired damages, returned to Negrais harbour, accompanied by the *Victoria*, which had also plucked up her courage. No answer being returned to the fire of the *Shaftesbury*, she sent a party, to find the island deserted and the decapitated and mangled bodies of eight Englishmen and over one hundred and fifty Indians, men, women, and children, lying amid the burnt and plundered ruins of the factory and the village. As nothing could now be done to salve life or property, the ships sailed for Calcutta, thus for ever ending the connection of the English with the island of Negrais.

The captives were taken to Pegu, where, after many months of negotiations and much suffering to them, they were ultimately released. The surrender of the renegade, Le Vigne, was demanded by the English but was prevented by his death. It was hinted that he had been secretly killed by order of Alompra to avoid any complications. If so, his fate was richly deserved.

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CHAPTER XV

THE ASSADA COLONISING VENTURE (1644–1646)

THE success of the colonising adventures of the English in the seventeenth century would seem to have been so uniform that the failure of the one about to be chronicled will come as a surprise to all but very few.

The prosperity of the settlements in the West Indies and Northern America in the earlier of the mid-decades of the seventeenth century, together with the potential profits that might accrue from an Eastern trade entrepot midway between Europe and India, inspired some of the rivals of the merchant venturers with the idea of establishing such a centre at Mauritius or at Madagascar itself or one of the islands adjacent to that coast.

The governing principle was that such settlements, colonised by Englishmen, should not be plantations in the American and West Indian style, but would eventually develop into regular ports of exchange, complete with docks, warehouses, and every other facility for handling cargo and repairing and re-provisioning ships. It was expected that vessels from Europe would terminate their voyage at Madagascar, as would similarly vessels from India and the Farther East, where they would exchange cargoes.

Besides this, vessels from Europe almost invariably called at Madagascar on their outward voyage to re-fit after the buffeting they had received when passing the Cape, to re-provision, and to recuperate their crews, the sickness amongst whom was always great. Similarly,

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vessels from the East which had met with stormy weather, as was usually the case, or which required to wood and water before passing the Cape on the homeward journey, often touched at ports of call on Madagascar or its islands for that purpose. Lastly, it was expected that in time these plantations would, as did the West Indies, even in those early days, soon provide a race of European seamen to complete the depleted crews, the lascar, in those days, being in no great favour.

It is interesting to note that exactly the same idea occurred to the pirates who infested the Eastern Seas from 1680 to 1720, for they established themselves at St. Mary's Island on the eastern coast, at the Comoro Islands on the northern, and at St. Augustine's Bay on the south-western coast, using all these places as depots and repairing stations for the pursuit of their nefarious trade. But they bred no mariners from their connections with the Malagasy women, as the resulting progeny was no use for seafaring purposes.

The place eventually selected for the first of these colonising ventures was the Bay of St. Augustine. This place was already familiar to both the merchants and mariners of the Company's service, most of whom reported favourably and some, indeed, in glowing terms, on the suitability of the place for colonists and the other project. But what these people overlooked was that their reception as visitors with plenty of money to spend or goods to barter for fruit and provisions would be very different to that accorded by the natives to permanent settlers who came to usurp their lands and trade. Not only this, but their brief stay of a few weeks after a long sea-voyage was not enough to familiarise them with the adverse climatic conditions.

The project first took shape in 1636, and was at once enthusiastically taken up by Endymion Porter, ever on the look out for something that would benefit his

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kind, and incidentally himself, in the matter of payments for concessions and free shares and a profitable enterprise. The command of the expedition was offered to Prince Rupert, of Cavalier fame, who thus wrote concerning it:

"Having a desire to put himself upon some honourable action, and been presented with a relation of Madagascar, which fully satisfies as to its fertility, the wholesomeness of the air, the plentifulness of provisions, and other cognisable matters, the Prince conceives that it may easily be made to hold the balance of all the trade between the East Indies, and the rest of the world. Therefore he hath resolved to go to the same Island and make it his plantation. The King hath graciously signified his intention to approve of the enterprise and will graciously assist his nephew. The King will also take it as a token of the love of his subjects if they will adventure their money, their persons, kindred, goods, and shipping, with Prince Rupert. Prince Rupert hath decided to send Captain John Bond with a ship and a pinnace, engineers, and artificers, who are to search out the best seat and harbour for fortifying, after which has been done, the Prince himself will follow."

But there was one sane person in the Stuart family in the person of the Queen of Bohemia, mother of Prince Rupert, who managed to put the closure on the scheme, so far as it concerned her son. She thus wrote to Sir Thomas Roe:

"March 4th, 1636. The Queen of Bohemia is very sure Sir Thomas must know the romance that some would put into Prince Rupert's head, of conquering Madagascar, where Endymion Porter, so they say, is to be Esquire, when the Prince, in the manner of Don Quixote, conquers that famous island. Most earnestly does the Queen beg of Sir Thomas to put this windmill out of Rupert's head, or to aid her in doing so."

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The end was that Prince Rupert was sent to the Continent on active service in the Bohemian wars. The scheme was next taken up by the Earl of Arundel, to whom John Bond now applied for assistance. The Earl issued a prospectus for a colonising venture at St. Augustine's, each share being valued at £40, in return for which the adventurer would receive a free grant of land and passage to the new colony. Those who could not deposit money were allowed to venture in return for four years' free service on the Earl of Arundel's own grant, at the end of which they would receive a grant of land, and be classified with the others.

In accordance with the spirit of the age, no attempt was made to acquire these lands by purchase or otherwise, the fact that they belonged to the heathen being considered sufficient warrant for their free acquisition. So, in order to encourage colonisation, King Charles very graciously granted Lord Arundel the islands of St. Helena, the Mauritius, Reunion, and Madagascar, the latter including the islands adjacent, which, as all were more or less inhabited, was very like giving the hide of the wild bear to anyone who could take it.

As might have been expected under such auspices, this scheme died the death it deserved, and no more was heard of any colonisation of Madagascar until August 1639. In that month the East India Company were informed that in spite of a promise that nothing would be done to endanger the monopoly of the Company, the King had given, at the instance of the Courteen Company, a full charter to Captain Bond. This charter gave him authority to "act as Captain-General of the expedition towards the Island of Madagascar, or St. Lawrence, near unto the East Indies, and to sail in such ships as may be under his command, into whatsoever seas may seem good to him and to trade wheresoever may be mentioned in his commission"—which was everywhere.

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Against this charter the Company protested so vigorously that it was held in abeyance until December 1642, in which month Bond came before the Court of Directors, and informed them that under his charter of 1639 he was about to send out a vessel of 350 tons, with 250 colonists, of whom forty were women and children, fifty spare seamen, and the remainder artificers, husbandmen, etc. The Directors answered him to the effect that they believed that this colonising project on his part was merely a blind to cover organised piracy in the Eastern seas, and that they would oppose his landing in Madagascar to the utmost of their ability. Bond defied them and withdrew.

The upshot was that the matter was referred to the House of Commons, and by them to the Committee of Trade, who permitted the expedition to proceed only on condition that Bond should enter into substantial recognisances to do nothing to damage the East India Company. This was the last of Captain Bond, but not of his charter, for though it remained in abeyance till 1644, it still held good. In that year it was taken up by the Courteen Company, under whose auspices the ship *James*, under Captain Smart, took out a company of one hundred and forty men, women, and children, who landed at St. Augustine's in March 1645.

No preparations whatever having been made to acquire land or supplies for the colonists, most of whom were townspeople, the unfortunate settlers were dumped ashore on the beach with a few barrels of ship's provisions. Many of them were married, with children, and all had paid their venture money. Having no shelter but grass huts, and the climate being sub-tropical and rainy, the colonists lived in the greatest misery for about twelve months, during which they were continually harassed by the natives and had little to live on except shellfish, fish itself, or such provisions

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as they could purchase with their personal belongings from the natives.

A curious incident was that the promoters of the scheme were so confident of success, that they actually sent out minting presses and men to work them. As the natives knew the value of coin, these men quickly turned all their available brass into *gold* moidores and pagodas, of which they had a considerable number left when the settlement was broken up, after about eighty had died. The remainder managed to make their way to the Comoros in one of the Company's ships, which took them so far but dare not take them farther towards India without permission.

After about twenty more had died, one of the Courteen's ships, the *Ruth*, arrived at the Comoros and took the survivors on to India, or rather such as desired to go there; some more being left at the Comoros, to be ultimately repatriated by the East India Company at their own expense. Amongst those who died was Smart, an application from whose widow is on record. The vessel dumped these people at Rajapore, a settlement of the Courteen Company, which was also derelict, and in the end they found their way to Surat, where most were taken into employment or sent home. A report concerning them contains the following:

"The company of the *Hind* coming up from Tuticorin touched at Rajapore, where they were cozened with over 300 pagodas, made at St. Lawrence out of base metal, which they took at one and a half rials the pagoda, though worth nothing. Indeed, so greate a dishonour hath never before befallen us in these parts, we receiving the blame, though abominating the proceedings."

One would think that this lesson would have sufficed. Perhaps it might, had news of the failure reached home or impressed those promoting such settlements with the seriousness of their undertaking. But hope springs

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eternal, and few but believe that, given the opportunity, they can succeed where others have failed. Whether or no, another expedition under the same auspices was sent out in the spring of 1849. This one was destined for Assada Island, on the west coast of Madagascar, a place now called Nossi Bé.

Assada was to form another link in the chain of settlements, but especially to tap the trade of the eastern coast of Africa, this being principally gold, ivory, and slaves, which were to be collected there for transport to India or such other places as would require them. As with the former case, nothing whatever had been settled with the inhabitants, who naturally opposed the landing of the large party from the *Assada Merchant*, as their ship was called, there being about one hundred and fifty all told, all men. Though it would appear to have been easy for such a party of armed men, under a determined leader, to have forced a landing, this was not done, for, after a boat's crew had been killed, Colonel Hunt, the governor of the new settlement, abandoned any further attempts, and re-embarking the survivors, sailed for a small island near by, which they named Goat's Island.

On this they hung precariously for some months, during which Governor Hunt and a number of others died. The survivors, after suffering much hardship and more mortality, became desperate, and decided to re-embark on the *Assada Merchant* and make for the mainland of Madagascar in the hope of finding a more congenial site. Here again they failed, for the boat's crew, which were prospecting for a landing, which included the master, purser, and nine men, were enticed ashore and murdered.

One again the *Assada Merchant* put out to sea and made for Assada Island, off which, to their great joy, they espied a couple of ships lying-to. These proved to be the *Bonito* and the *Lioness*, which had brought

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out more settlers from England under the command of a Sergeant-major Hartley. Here we should mention that the sergeant-major of the seventeenth century was the major of the present. This man, being a much more capable leader, or having more men, effected a landing on the southern end of the island, and there established their plantation.

Six months' provisions were landed from the ships, and it was decided that if, at the end of six months, no more settlers arrived, the project was to be entirely abandoned. As a matter of fact the original settlers were strongly against any further attempts. But their opinions were brushed aside, though they were listened to so far as to continue the experiment for six months only. A brief experience by the new contingent soon showed that the difficulties were insuperable. The natives were constantly hostile and murdered every man who strayed into the woods or even went beyond gunshot of the guards. They had no proper shelter, were ignorant of the climatic dangers, subjected to almost constant rain with only the shelter of a grass hut, and had to live mostly on ship's provisions.

Consequently, they died off rapidly. In the end, without waiting the full time for the contingent due in August, the whole party embarked in the vessels, the *Assada Merchant* and the pinnace, which had been left for them, and made their way to Surat, where they arrived on the 5th October 1650. Once again the London Company proved a friend in need, for it provided for all. Meanwhile, soon after the departure of the *Assada Merchant* and her company, another batch of forty settlers arrived from England.

The party sent ashore to seek out the former settlers, returned with the intelligence that there were nothing but graves to be found. Thinking that the settlers might have gone to the mainland, the *Supply* and her party proceeded thither and worked along the coast,

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seeking for them. All attempts at landing were frustrated by the natives, so in the end it was decided to abandon the search, and look for the survivors at the Comoro Islands. Here they were informed that they had gone to Mozambique, which was quite untrue, as the *Supply* found on her arrival there, so she gave up the search in disgust and went on to Bantam.

During her wanderings a third batch had come out on the *Welcome*, and yet a fourth batch on the *Blessing*; both of whom, on finding no trace of anyone on the island, returned to St. Augustine's Bay, where they found a letter, sent from Surat by the *Assada Merchant*, informing them of the fate of the first batch. So, abandoning the project entirely, both vessels, which belonged to the Courteen Company, sailed for Fort St. George, from whence the last batches of settlers were repatriated, or, as with the others, taken into the service of the London Company.

So, disastrously commenced, continued, and ended, one of the few unsuccessful colonising ventures of the English.

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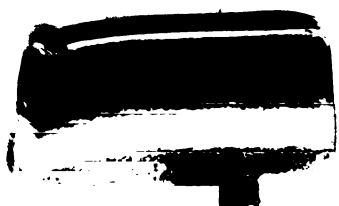

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